CATERING VANS ■ HELPING THE HOMELESS ■ FRUIT VINAIGRETTES

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

VOL. 10 NO. 10 NOVEMBER 1990

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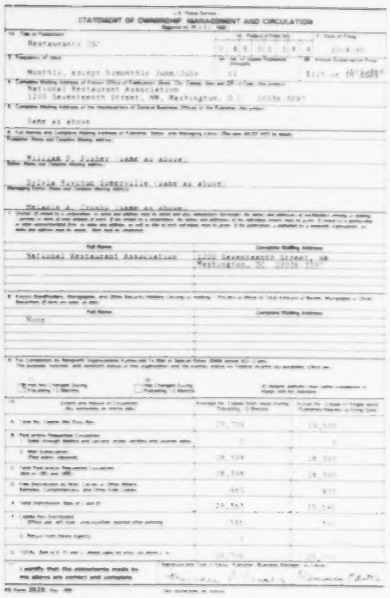

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RESTAURANTS USA

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Senior Director Jeffrey R. Prince
Editor Sylvia Rivchun-Somerville
Managing Editor Melanie A. Crosby
Staff Contributors
Jennifer Batty
Elizabeth Gordon
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Diane Welland
Art Direction
Magazine: Tom Bellucci
Covers: Richard Earle
Editorial Secretary Ronda Bowers
Word Processing Operator Agnes Harkins
Intern Zari Malsawma

Editorial office and association headquarters 1200 Seventeenth St., N.W. Washington DC 20036-3097 (202) 331-5900
Chicago office 150 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2000 Chicago, IL 60601 (312) 853-2525

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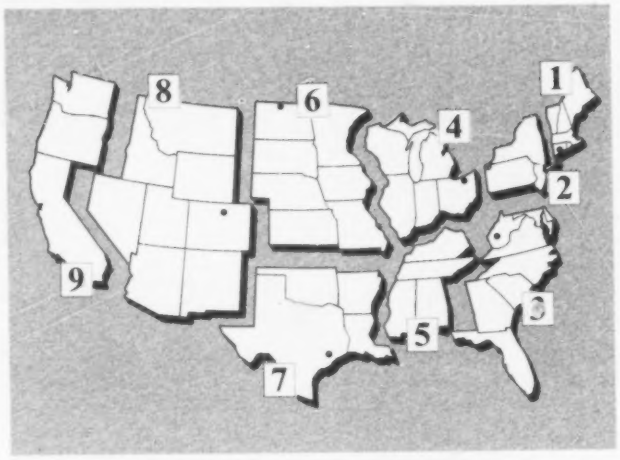

1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: Higganum, CT
Association member: J. Andrew Engelhardt
Operation: Glockenspiel
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 16 years
Seats: 100
Meals served: Dinner

At least five restaurants have closed in the past year in the 6,000-person community of Higganum, Connecticut. **J. Andrew Engelhardt,** owner and chef of the Glockenspiel restaurant, attributes their demise to the economic downswing. His weapon against this adversary is longevity and his on-site management.

About 70 percent of Glockenspiel's customers are destination oriented because the restaurant is one of only six German establishments in Connecticut. Engelhardt says his interest in German cooking took hold during his training with a Swiss chef.

Engelhardt carries on the tradition of training new chefs by choosing cooks right out of culinary school. "You learn more when you are taken under someone's wing," he says. "Six of my past employees now own restaurants; that makes me feel good."

2 MID-ATLANTIC

Location: Fairview, PA
Association member: Robert Lindgren
Operation: The Green Shingle
Profile: Family-style operation
In business: 52 years
Seats: 125
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

The Green Shingle restaurant is basically a truck stop, says manager **Raymond Hart.** Because of the steady stream of truckers and travelers, business has been "very good."

Hart offers diners daily and manager's specials. "We appeal to all types of people. The menu contains a variety of food," he says. Typically, there are eight or nine entrees from which diners select. Since truck drivers must eat a majority of their meals on the road, Hart says he tries to provide them with low-cholesterol selections, such as baked boneless chicken, as well as homestyle favorites like meatloaf.

Another important consideration for travelers, notes Hart, is clean rest rooms. "We have the cleanest rest rooms around. I have a guy who works outside seven days a week—rain or shine—picking up trash and sweeping up," he says. "The owner believes that if a restaurant looks dirty on the outside, then people will figure it is dirty on the inside."

Hart advertises the restaurant through billboards and by supporting community activities, such as Little League baseball.

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Charleston, WV
Association member: Zoe (Humphreys) Sarrett
Operation: Humphreys' Pine Room and Driftwood
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 44 years
Seats: 100 in dining room, 600 in banquet room
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

"We were serving baked steak and roast beef with dressing before anyone even thought of Stove Top," says **Zoe Sarrett,** owner of Humphreys' Pine Room and Driftwood. She and her parents opened the business in 1944 as Humphreys' Dairy Bar. "It was right after the War, and things were different then. We served milk shakes, homemade ice cream and sundaes. And we had a jukebox."

Sarrett has added three dining rooms to the original operation, and she opens the banquet room on Sunday. "Our busiest day is Sunday, right after church," she says. Eighty percent of her customers are senior citizens, and she has discovered that one way to encourage them to eat in her restaurant is to put tablecloths on the tables.

Customers also enjoy the decor, with its pine tables, fireplaces and antiques. "We get bus tours. Sometimes they'll just come in to look around," says Sarrett.

4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Chagrin Falls, OH
Association member: Edward Thomas
Operation: Hunter's Hollow Tavern
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 13 years
Seats: 150
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"During the last eight months, we've been in a big downswing. We are in a recession," says **Edward Thomas,** owner of Hunter's Hollow Tavern. Thomas' business has been fair, but he has noticed the change in the economy.

The mostly local clientele comes to the operation, which resembles an English hunt club, for its fresh seafood, veal Oscar and steaks. A combo plays music nightly.

Thomas says he plans to remain competitive by providing "good food, good service and by being here day and night." He also advertises in the local paper and occasionally on cable television. But primarily he relies on word-of-mouth recommendations.

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Picayune, MS
Association member: Joan Clark
Operation: Hide-A-Way Lake Club
Profile: Country-club-style restaurant
In business: 21 years
Seats: 140
Meals served: Lunch, dinner on Saturday night

"We're doing a lot better than last year. The whole

area was depressed in 1989 because of the oil industry, but now it's taken an upturn," reports **Joan Clark,** manager of Hide-A-Way Lake Club, a members-only community operation. The club is located on 1,600 acres of land, which includes a 200-acre lake. There are more than 500 homes in the development, with some members coming to Picayune from New Orleans for a getaway weekend.

During the week, members enjoy buffet-style meals. Clark and her staff never deal with money; members use their in-house credit cards.

The club's biggest business comes from catering and banquets.

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Westhope, ND
Association member: Julie Cargo
Operation: Gateway Inn
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 8 years
Seats: 60 in dining room, 80 banquet seats
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

When the leaves start to turn and the hunting season begins, the Gateway Inn is very busy, says manager **Julie Cargo.** Located six miles from the Canadian border, the restaurant also draws in travelers to and from Canada.

"Years ago there was a hotel and restaurant on this spot, but it burned down. The community got together and raised the money to build this place," says Cargo. The inn is owned by Souris Valley Development Corporation, a community company.

The restaurant features daily luncheon specials and a Sunday buffet. The average price of a dinner is $6 to $7. Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon are the busiest times—that's when members of the 650-person community come in for the homemade pastries, soups and steaks.

Cargo says finding help has been a problem. "My people work 30 to 40-hour weeks. No one is really part time," she says.

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Houston, TX
Association member: Edd Hendee
Operation: Taste of Texas
Profile: Fine-dining restaurant
In business: 13 years
Seats: 230
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

The Taste of Texas restaurant was doing well even when the Houston economy was not, reports owner **Edd Hendee,** because "we worked hard and took care of our customers." The operation features certified Angus-beef steaks and prime rib in an open-air, ranch-style setting.

Hendee says his restaurant does not have much direct competition, although he doesn't "give a great deal of thought to the direct competition," preferring instead to concentrate on customers. He fosters a high level of service by training his staff, working "shoulder to shoulder" with them and sponsoring in-house contests.

Hendee says he has noticed a change in his customers' eating habits in recent years. "They are much more attuned to quality, and they aren't drinking," he says.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Greeley, CO
Association member: Rob Haimson
Operation: Potato Brumbaugh's
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 9 years
Seats: 150
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"While others are going out of business, we are increasing—not a great deal, but some," says **Rob Haimson,** owner of Potato Brumbaugh's restaurant. The secret to his success "is staying within our realm of expertise and remaining consistent." Haimson also reads a lot, visits other restaurants to see what's on their menus and travels to get new ideas.

Because of the restaurant's name, "people at first thought it was one of those little baked-potato places, but we're not that at all," Haimson says. The restaurant was named for a character in James Michener's book *Centennial.* The story takes place in the area where the restaurant is located.

The restaurant features prime rib, steaks and seafood, but more than half of the orders are for prime rib. Haimson puts two specials on the menu every week. "Running specials gives us a chance to see how difficult it is to prepare the items in the kitchen and also allows us to see how customers respond to them," he says.

Unlike many other restaurateurs, Haimson reports that he has never had a labor problem. The two colleges in his community of 60,000 add 20,000 students to the labor pool. "I have never had any problems getting help, and I've gotten good kids, too—not just warm bodies off the street," says Haimson.

9 PACIFIC

Location: Hermosa Beach, CA
Association member: John Bowler
Operation: Fat Face Fenner's Falloon
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 15 years
Seats: 90
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

When **John Bowler** bought Fat Face Fenner's Falloon restaurant, he also inherited the name. "The original owners named the restaurant for Keith Fenner, who's about 6'2" and skinny as a rail. Fat Face became his nickname," chuckles Bowler.

The restaurant, located one block off the beach, features half-pound hamburgers with a choice of 20 toppings. "We're famous for our hamburgers; we've won awards for them. In these days of poker-chip burgers, real hamburgers look enormous to most people," explains Bowler. The menu also contains soups, salads and sandwiches.

Hermosa Beach has changed a lot in the 15 years Bowler has been in business. "It's gone more upscale with beach property being what it is. There are more two-income households," he says. Bowler competes with the many other beach-bar restaurants by staying with what works. "We've established our niche by becoming known for having the best hamburger, and we stick with that," he says.

—Jennifer Batty

COVER STORY
CATERING ON THE MOVE

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Cover photos by Gary Landsman. Backdrop by Propeller Studio.

National search for exemplary small businesses

If your restaurant has successfully overcome adversity and could serve as a model for other small business owners nationwide, you may be a candidate for the Blue Chip Enterprise Award. The award is sponsored by the Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Participation in the program is easy. Simply call 1-800-AWARD 91 toll-free to request information and an application. Companies can also be nominated by outside vendors, suppliers, employees or customers. To be eligible your restaurant must employ between five and 300 people and have been in continuous operation for at least three years.

Unlike any other national program, the Blue Chip Enterprise Award will focus on how small businesses have faced challenges and managed critical resources to emerge stronger. Examples of these resources can include technology, marketing, finance, the community, quality assurance and human resources.

Case studies of award-winning companies will be compiled into a video-resource library and printed reference material and will be made available to the small-business community through local and state chambers of commerce around the country.

Panels of independent judges in each state will identify up to four "Blue Chip" businesses per state that will be recognized in *Nation's Business* magazine, published by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. One business per state and the District of Columbia will be featured on "Nation's Business Today," seen daily on ESPN. From these 51 companies, a panel of national judges will select three to represent America's small-business community at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce annual meeting in Washington DC in April 1991.

All entries must be received by January 31, 1991.

Culinary Team USA gears up for competitions

Ready for public scrutiny. **With their cameras rolling and pencils cocked, members of the press observed the 1992 Culinary Team USA in action for the first time in October. The team held a three-day practice session at the team's national headquarters, Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida. Next on the team's agenda is the Culinary World Cup to be held November 9 to 13, which will feature traditional American "everyday" food, such as braised short ribs and warm potato salad.**

Health-awareness program for employees

McGuffey's Restaurants, Inc., headquartered in Asheville, North Carolina, is implementing a new health-awareness program to stimulate employees to be more health conscious.

The health-awareness program has started at the corporate and general-manager level and should include all managers next year. By 1992 all hourly employees will be included.

The program begins with a life survey and physical fitness and drug tests. An administrator then meets with each participant individually to discuss the results and set goals for the coming year.

Michael Brandson, vice president of human resources, takes the fitness test required of all McGuffey's Restaurants' general managers and corporate staff.

McGuffey's believes the program is an important investment in its employees. In the long run it may also lead to lower insurance premiums.

Students ship cookies to classmates in Saudi Arabia

U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia will have a sweet holiday season, thanks to the Baltimore International Culinary College in Baltimore, Maryland. The college will donate 100 pounds of cookies to Operation Cookie, the operation airlifting home-baked cookies to U.S. troops in the Middle East.

"We have had at least three students called away from their studies to report to active duty in Saudi Arabia or to replace U.S.-based troops that have been sent to the the Middle East. Participating in Operation Cookie is one way our students can support their classmates and the thousands of troops in the Saudi Arabian desert," says Roger

Gobble-Fest for the homeless

Thanksgiving should be a special day for the homeless, believes Alan Morstein, founder of Stuff 'n Turkey, a 16-unit chain of fast food restaurants based in Owings Mills, Maryland, that serves fresh-cooked turkey on home-baked bread. That is why Morstein is initiating Gobble-Fest.

Both company-owned stores and franchises will be participating in this program within their local communities by providing local shelters with complete cooked Thanksgiving dinners with all the fixin's: fresh roasted turkey breast, mixed vegetables, stuffing, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie, milk and canned sodas. Delivery will be made the day before Thanksgiving.

Chylinski, CEC, CCE, college president.

Students in the college's evening program will bake part of the college's shipment of cookies in class; student volunteers will have the use of college kitchens to complete the baking for the shipment.

Tips for shipping cookies to the Middle East

Do not send

☐ Liquor or flavoring extracts that contain alcohol (i.e., vanilla)—illegal in Saudi Arabia

☐ Butter or peanut butter—can become rancid in desert conditions

☐ Bran, wheat germ, macadamia nuts—these have a high oil content and can become rancid

☐ Chocolate chips, M&Ms, etc.—can melt in the desert heat

Do send

☐ Chewy cookies, such as oatmeal, raisin, sugar and spice cookies

☐ Brownies made with cocoa powder

☐ Pfeffernusse (European holiday cookie)

☐ Gingerbread (made from a recipe using little or no molasses)

☐ Cookies made with powdered sugar

☐ Dried-fruit bars

Packaging pointer: Popcorn, unbuttered and unsalted, is an ideal packaging material. It's inexpensive, it cushions the cookies and it's an added treat for the troops.

—Natasha Shishkevish, pastry instructor, Baltimore International Culinary College

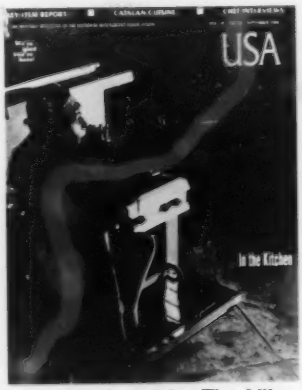
FEEDBACK

Dear Editor:
Your article on hiring chefs was excellent [September 1990]. Great info. Thank you for not making me come across as being pedantic.

—Marcel Desaulniers, The Trellis Restaurant, Williamsburg, Virginia

We're very excited about the article promoting designated drivers [September 1990]. The support of the National Restaurant Association has meant a lot to MADD. It's a real pleasure to work with such great people.

—Sally O'Connor, Director of Community Programs, Mothers Against Drunk Driving



I am employed by The Village Tavern in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. I recently read an article titled "What's a Consultant?" in your June/July 1990 issue. . . . Keep writing the great articles!

—Lee Witherow

FDA puts eggs on its "potentially hazardous" list

Restaurateurs should make some changes in the way they handle eggs to guard against potential contamination from Salmonella enteritidis.

After water, eggs may be the most frequently used food ingredient in a restaurant kitchen. Not only are eggs served directly, but they are also a common ingredient in other menu items—from baked goods to salad dressings. According to 1989 figures from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the American Egg Board, foodservice accounted for 1.5 billion pounds, or 14 trillion individual shell eggs—some 28 percent of the total U.S. production.

That's why a recent U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) interpretation of its model foodservice sanitation codes may have a sweeping effect on restaurants. As part of the effort to control foodborne illness caused by eggs contaminated with *Salmonella enteritidis* (*S.e.*), FDA has redefined shell eggs as a "potentially hazardous food," a regulatory term which means that eggs must meet time/temperature requirements for delivery and storage, cooking and holding before service.

Under the new FDA recommendation, state and local health agencies may soon be imposing these new requirements on restaurant operators:

☐ Shell eggs must be received and stored under refrigeration (45°F or less).

☐ Shell eggs must be cooked to an internal temperature of 140°F and held at that temperature if not served immediately.

☐ Raw shell eggs may be prohibited for use in uncooked menu items such as Caesar salad and hollandaise or bearnaise sauces.

☐ Shell eggs cannot be "pooled" or combined from different cartons in such items as french toast, Monte Cristo sandwich batter or scrambled eggs for buffet service—if the pooled product will be held before or after cooking.

Hepatitis guidelines for the health community

Combating overzealous regulatory publicity. **The technical services department of the National Restaurant Association was instrumental in forming the committee that produced these guidelines for handling hepatitis A outbreaks. To increase credibility with regulators, the booklet was distributed by the National Environmental Health Association. Response to the publication has been positive.**

Why these new restrictions?

Beginning in the early 1980s, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) noticed an increased incidence of *S.e.* outbreaks. Symptoms usually include abdominal cramps, fever, headache, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Although the illness is usually of fairly short duration, it may be particularly virulent for the very young, the elderly and persons already weakened by other serious illnesses or for those whose immune system is weakened.

CDC noted that *S.e.* infections seemed to be concentrated in the New England and Central Atlantic regions; other areas have reported increased outbreaks, but the incidence is less concentrated. Most outbreaks associated with eggs appear to be related to pooling of eggs, time/temperature abuse and consumption of raw or incompletely cooked eggs.

From January 1985 through October 1989, *S.e.* caused 6,604 illnesses and 43 deaths. CDC studies implicated eggs as the likely source in 73 percent of the cases where food was identified. Examples include Caesar salad; some hollandaise or bearnaise sauces; noncommercial mayonnaise, eggnog or ice cream; and dishes where eggs are often pooled or combined, such as scrambled eggs, omelets, french toast, Monte Cristo sandwiches, mousses and meringues.

What operators can do

Foodservice operators should re-examine their procedures for storage, handling and preparation of eggs to reduce the risk of *S.e.* infection. Some mea-

A historic change

Historically, Grade A shell eggs have had a good safety record. Disease problems associated with eggs in the past have usually been caused by fecal contamination of unwashed, unsanitary, nonGrade A eggs. Implementation of the Eggs Products Inspection Act of 1970 by USDA and improvements in handling and processing by the egg industry led FDA in 1973 to exempt fresh, clean, uncracked, odor-free shell eggs from time/temperature controls in its various model codes.

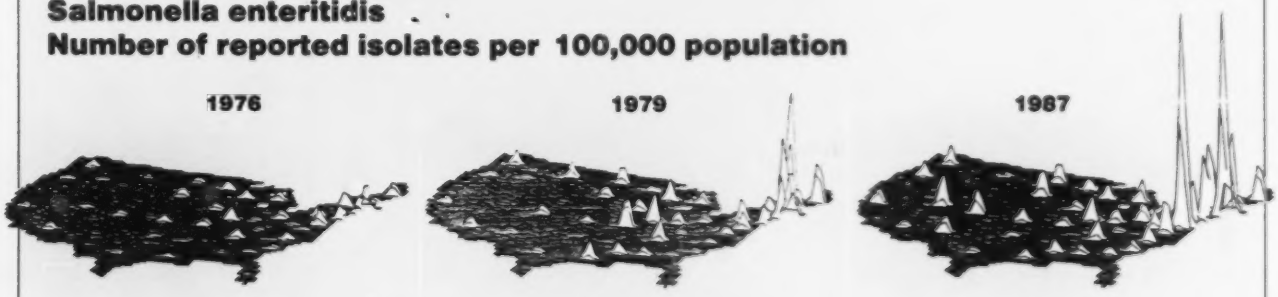
However, the recent involvement of shell eggs in *S.e.* outbreaks has forced a change in that view, because it now appears that this organism is *inside* the shells and membranes of those clean, uncracked, Grade A eggs that were once thought to be inviolable.

S.e. in laying flocks presents a "good news/bad news" situation. First, the good news: *S.e.* does *not* cause clinical illness in chickens, nor does it affect chicken meat. (The recent outbreaks in Great Britain that *did* affect chicken meat involve a different strain of *S.e.* not yet found in this country.) The bad news is that infected hens are difficult to identify, and control efforts focused on eliminating *S.e.* from breeder and layer flocks may have to work backwards, tracing contaminated eggs that are first associated with disease outbreaks. It appears that the proportion of eggs contaminated with *S.e.* is relatively small, but, like the infected chickens that lay them, there is no way to identify *which* egg might be contaminated; that's why it is so important to avoid "pooling," which spreads the contamination in large volume preparations. (*Note:* Utensils such as mixing bowls or whisks can be a source of inadvertent "pooling" contamination, if used over a period of time between successive batches of eggs. Utensils should be washed, rinsed and sanitized frequently.)

USDA, FDA and the egg-production industry are all actively involved in searching for more effective controls at the production level of the egg market. When an "infected flock" is identified, eggs are diverted from the table-egg market and sent to egg-breaking plants for pasteurization; or the flock owner may elect to sacrifice the infected flock. FDA is developing other proposals for the control of eggs, in the event that current flock-identification procedures do not prove to be effective in stemming outbreaks of *S.e.* Some areas being considered include: sampling poultry feed and ingredients to determine if *S.e.* contamination is present, requiring additional labeling of egg cartons, requiring certification of flocks as being *S.e.*-free, and requiring refrigeration of eggs during storage and transportation.

For foodservice operators, all of this means that "the rules have changed" indeed and that they, in turn, must make changes in the ways that they receive, store, handle, cook and serve eggs to their customers.

Salmonella enteritidis
Number of reported isolates per 100,000 population



The outbreak of Salmonella enteritidis is concentrated in—but not limited to—the Northeast.

sures that can be taken include:

□ Requesting refrigerated delivery of eggs and storing those eggs at 45°F or less

□ Minimizing storage time

□ Avoiding "pooling" of eggs

□ Substituting commercially pasteurized eggs or egg products in such items as french-toast batter, mousses and scrambled eggs

□ Not using raw eggs in menu items that will not be thoroughly cooked. Commercially pasteurized eggs or egg products can be substituted for raw eggs in such items as Caesar salad

□ Cooking eggs or menu items containing eggs to 140°F. (At this temperature the white is firmly set and coagulated; the yolk is "beginning to thicken—it is not runny, but not hard.")

The regulatory prognosis

Although the FDA Interpretation does not have the immediate force of law for individual foodservice operations, many regulatory jurisdictions will adopt FDA's Interpretation fairly quickly. The first states to do so will probably be in the Northeast and Central Atlantic regions, where the number of *S.e.* outbreaks has been the greatest. But other states may begin various degrees of selective enforcement out of a sense of caution. Some jurisdictions have considered requiring a menu-warning statement to advise cutomers of the problem, so that they can make an informed choice. Check with your local health department to be sure what the specific requirement will be in your area.

—Robert E. Harrington

Restaurateurs champion dolphin-safe tuna

Forget just a day for dolphins—1990 may be the *year* of the dolphin, at least as far as the tuna industry and some restaurateurs are concerned.

More than 100,000 dolphins perish annually, entangled in the nets of tuna fishermen in the Eastern Tropical Pacific (a coastal area that runs from Chile to Southern California). Trapped beneath the surface, these mammals (who need oxygen to breathe) drown en masse, as hunters search for popular yellowfin tuna that, for a reason that biologists have not been able to completely explain, swim below the dolphins.

Although dolphin mortality has dropped significantly in the 18 years since the passage of the Marine Mammal Protection Act in 1972, the numbers are still high. But things are beginning to change.

Last April, after growing pressure from environmental groups, legislators, and concerned citizens (including school children), the three largest U.S. sellers of canned tuna—Starkist, Bumble Bee and Chicken of the Sea—announced that they would no longer purchase or sell tuna caught by methods harmful to dolphins. "We don't make any exceptions," says Erik Bloemendaal, general manager of quality and communication for Starkist. "Tuna must be dolphin-safe before we buy it. We will accept no fish that is not categorically dolphin-safe."

Through the broad network of independent brokers and distributors, some of this tuna ends up on restaurant and institution shelves. Hence, many restaurateurs may already be contributing indirectly, and perhaps unknowingly, to dolphin safety. Some operators, however, are taking a more direct and active role in the tuna/dolphin issue.

Blimpie takes an active role

Anthony Conza, president and co-founder of Blimpie, one of the nation's top submarine sandwich chains, has made such an effort. The small chain, owned by the Astor Restaurant Group and based in New York City, boasts only 380 units nationwide (primarily on the East Coast), but it took a big step for the dolphins when it decided that only dolphin-safe tuna would appear in its stores.

Conza believes that the pro-dolphin stance will triumph in the end. "We believe that customers will support us more if we adopt an environmentally responsible position," he says.

Anthony Conza, president and co-founder of Blimpie, was instrumental in the development of his chain's "Save the Dolphins" promotional program.

The decision was mainly a result of Conza's personal involvement. Long before the explosion of press coverage surrounding the commercial canneries' policy change, he became aware of the dolphins' plight and was moved to action. "When the tuna/dolphin issue was brought to our attention, we immediately began working on a solution," he says.

After further research, including working with environmental groups, such as the Dolphin Research Center in Marathon Shores, Florida, Conza created the "Save the Dolphins" program and laid down Blimpie's "dolphin-safe" law: No store will purchase any tuna that is not dolphin safe, nor will it serve any yellowfin tuna.

The transition was not particularly easy for Conza and his chain. It took a great deal of time and hard work to find a distributor that would guarantee the "safeness" of the product at, of course, a higher cost. In addition, "safe" Skip Jack tuna, which the restaurants now serve, is slightly darker in color than the previous store brand. Conza feared the color change might hurt sales. So far, however, sales are still strong, and the chain has decided to absorb the minor expense in order to promote this important cause.

Conza believes that the pro-dolphin stance will triumph in the end. "We believe that customers will support us more if we adopt an environmentally responsible position," he says.

Now that he has ensured the quality of his tuna, Conza concentrates on educating his customers. Blimpie stores display "Save the Dolphins" certificates proclaiming them an "authorized store," and Conza encourages consumers and other restaurants to get involved.

Customers catalyze Unicorn Village

At Unicorn Village in North Miami Beach, Florida, it was the customers who provided the impetus for change. "They alerted us to the problem," says Jerry Walper, manager of the 300-seat midscale restaurant.

The 11-year-old establishment—which includes a 14,000-square-foot natural foods market—has always been concerned with environmental issues. No smoking is allowed on the premises, water is purified and organically grown food is used whenever possible; but the tuna/dolphin issue didn't come to light until several years ago. "We didn't even understand the issue until the early 1980s," says Walper, "but more and more customers began taking a stance on it, and that's when we made the change." And, like Blimpie, Unicorn Village was well ahead of the commercial canneries. Dolphin-safe tuna first appeared on the shelves of the gourmet market almost eight years ago.

Now, all canned tuna served at Unicorn Village is guaranteed dolphin-safe Tongol tuna, which is caught in the Gulf of Siam without harm to marine life. Fresh tuna is line-caught as well, and all tuna dishes are marked on the menu with a dolphin emblem.

"We go through a lot of tuna here," says Walper, "but with our clientele there is simply no other option. Even if only 1 or 2 percent of our customers feel strongly about the issue, that 1 or 2 percent is very important to us. We'll make the extra effort. Besides, this is more than a business venture for us."

Still a long way to go

Protecting the dolphins, and other marine life, has become more than a business venture for many, but there is still a long way to go toward the goal of no dolphin deaths and no dolphin injury. "Zero tolerance is the only acceptable way," says Bloemendaal.

—Melanie A. Crosby

How you can get involved

There are many ways for restaurateurs to get involved.

You can track down the source of your tuna and the methods used to catch it. You can advertise your dolphin-safe stance by using in-house displays, such as wall plaques and window decals or menu advertisements, and by developing a promotional campaign such as Conza's "Save the Dolphins" program. You can also heighten customer awareness by promoting environmental groups' pursuits, such as Greenpeace's "Save the Dolphins" crusade.

Every step, no matter how small, is an important step in this worthwhile cause.

Fall Board meeting report

The National Restaurant Association's board of directors gathered in Washington DC last month for its annual fall meeting. The following reports and resolutions came out of the meeting:

The **government affairs** committee determined that the five most important issues before Congress are FICA tax repeal, the Civil Rights Act, the business-meal-deduction issue, child-labor legislation and the small-business minimum-wage exemption. In order to influence lawmakers on these issues, the committee mapped out a strategy that combines direct lobbying, grassroots mobilization and PAC contributions.

The **state relations** committee reported 83 grassroots meetings between Key Contacts and their congressional representatives since May. The committee called for an increase in such meetings and for a renewed focus on making current Key Contacts more active.

The **political action** committee designated $166,950 to 66 candidates—five Democrats and 61 Republicans. During the board meeting, the committee hosted a fundraising dinner for the Bill Zeliff-for-Congress campaign; Zeliff, a restaurateur, is the Republican nominee for New Hampshire's 1st congressional district.

The committee also announced that NRA-PAC has achieved 60 percent of its fundraising goals for this election cycle.

The **membership** committee approved extension of Oregon and South Carolina's dual-membership agreement for two years. On January 1, 1991, Indiana will become a dual membership state, bringing the total number of states with joint/dual agreements to 20.

The **communications** committee reported on the progress of the association's "We're glad you're here!" campaign. Information on the campaign has been mailed to 38,000 operators, and the campaign has been publicized in the trade press, on CNN and in the *New York Times*.

The committee also considered a variety of projects to commemorate the association's 75th anniversary, to begin during the fall of

"Celebration of Education" begins with counselors

Florida Restaurant Association

The Westin Hotel Cypress Creek
Fort Lauderdale

Through a spirited talk and video presentation, NRA President Michael Hurst communicated his enthusiasm for the foodservice industry and the opportunities it offers to the 240 counselors who attended the annual conference of the Occupational Specialists and Guidance Counselors Association. If the counselors communicate the same message to their students, word of foodservice career opportunities can potentially reach thousands of high school students.

1993 and to climax at the 1994 convention in Chicago. Projects under consideration include videos, coffee-table books, media packets, charitable activities and events to promote the industry and the association.

The **Projects With Industry (PWI)** program, designed to match disabled workers with foodservice careers, continues to expand. A survey of 150 leading chains shows efforts are being made to attract workers with disabilities. The PWI committee announced that a foodservice careers booklet and videotape will soon be available.

The **research** committee announced that a survey of wages for salaried employees will soon complement the survey of wages for hourly employees.

The **technical services** committee reported that, as a result of association testimony before the Senate's Small Business Committee, the Occupational Safety and Hazard Administration (OSHA) is reevaluating the Hazard Communications Standard that required employers to specially train workers who use any chemicals deemed hazardous. The committee also announced the upcoming inaugural meeting of the Multi-Unit Environmental Affairs Officers' Executive Study Group.

According to the **convention** committee, only one percent of exhibitors surveyed at the 1990 Show reported they would not return in 1991. Also, the committee reported a new alliance with the Hotel-Motel Association of Illinois in order to secure new lodging-oriented exhibitors and to increase hotelier attendance at the Show.

POLITICS ON OUR MENU

Operators champion foodservice perspective at 1990 Public Affairs Conference

Keynote speaker Jim Miller, former director of the Office of Management and Budget, spoke to foodservice operators on a variety of subjects, including the federal budget system and business-meal deductibility.

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The 1990 Public Affairs Conference included productive meetings between operators and legislators, such as this roundtable discussion between Rep. Hank Brown (R-CO) and Colorado restaurateurs.

A record 262 members of Congress attended the eighth annual *Chef d'oeuvre* reception, which was catered by eight of Washington DC's finest restaurants. Here, NRA Director Beirne Brown of Cuisine Management, Inc., Rep. Bill Grant (R-FL), Rep. Cliff Stearns (R-FL), Sen. Connie Mack (R-FL) and Rick Walsh, vice president of government relations for General Mills Restaurants, enjoy some friendly conversation.

Foodservice operators from 42 states marched into Washington DC on September 24 to 26 to impress upon legislators and regulators the importance of foodservice issues.

Successful lobbying blitz

The 412 restaurateurs who attended the National Restaurant Association's sixth annual Public Affairs Conference visited 388 of the 535 Senate and House offices in an intense September 25 lobbying blitz. Operators zeroed in on gaining support for repealing the FICA tax on tips, softening the Civil Rights Act of 1990, correcting the minimum-wage small-business exemption, rebuffing stricter teen employment laws and preserving business-meal deductibility.

The overwhelming grassroots lobbying pressure convinced at least 38 members of Congress to pledge their support for H.R. 446 and S. 1815—bills to repeal the 1987 law requiring operators to pay FICA taxes on all tips their employees report. Conferees also obtained several commitments from senators and representatives to uphold President Bush's likely veto of the Civil Rights Act of 1990.

"It's really great to feel you can make a difference on a national level," said conference attendee Martha Pride, who employs 50 people at her restaurant, The Stone Hearth, in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. "The conference gave me a whole different insight into the way government works."

Republican Whip Newt Gingrich (R-GA) commended restaurateurs at the conference for their lobbying efforts, noting that "the business community is never going to get the respect it deserves on Capitol Hill until it demands it!"

Insights into government

1990 Public Affairs Conference Chairman Bruce C. Cotton, senior vice president of Jerrico, Inc., in Lexington, Kentucky, introduced conferees to a variety of speakers who shared behind-the-scenes looks at foodservice issues:

More than 400 restaurateurs from 42 states attended the sixth annual Public Affairs Conference to meet with legislators and promote foodservice interests.

DC ROUNDUP

□ *Budget bill likely to affect foodservice.* As Congress put the finishing touches on a budget for the current fiscal year, restaurateurs began girding for likely increases in federal alcohol excise taxes—one item Congress was almost certain to include as a revenue-raiser in the FY 1991 budget.

As this issue of ***Restaurants USA*** went to press, the National Restaurant Association was hopeful that Congress would also pass at least a one-year extension of both the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC) and the 25 percent tax deduction that the self-employed can take for health-insurance costs. Both tax breaks expired September 30, 1990.

The association was waging a fierce battle at the end of last month to get Congress to reject a House plan that would raise revenues by assessing higher penalties against employers accused of violating teen labor laws. The plan, a last-minute addition to the House budget bill that was not included in the Senate version, would raise maximum child-labor penalties from the current level of $1,000 to $10,000.

□ *Federal advisory organization recommends restaurant labeling.* The National Restaurant Association has gone on the offensive to protest the September 26, 1990, recommendation of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) that "limited-menu" restaurants be required to disclose nutrition information either on food labels or by some other means at the point of sale.

The restaurant provisions, part of a comprehensive report on nutrition labeling commissioned by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), also include a recommendation that all full-service restaurants be required to provide detailed nutrient analyses for standard menu items upon request.

Calling the NAS suggestions "preposterous" and pointing out that Congress exempts restaurants from two pending labeling bills, association president Michael Hurst has asked FDA and USDA to reject NAS's recommendations as impractical, unnecessary and unenforceable. FDA and USDA have not yet said how they plan to proceed.

□ *Association-opposed civil rights bill vetoed by President.* The Civil Rights Act of 1990, landmark legislation making it easier for plaintiffs in job bias cases to prove discrimination and collect large damage awards from their employers, was vetoed by President Bush on October 22, 1990. Two days later the Senate fell one vote short of the majority needed to override the veto.

The President feared that the legislation would encourage litigation and could force employers to adopt hiring quotas in order to head off lawsuits. However, the legislation is likely to be reintroduced soon after the 102nd Congress reconvenes in January.

□ *President signs bill authorizing small-business conference.* President Bush signed a bill last month that gives the green light to the federal government to begin planning a White House Small Business Conference for as early as 1994.

Small-business owners attending state conferences in 1992 and 1993 will be chosen as delegates to the national conference.

Similar White House conferences in 1980 and 1986 were instrumental in helping to steer Congress away from legislation that would have had an adverse effect on small businesses. Delegates at each of the previous conferences drew up 60-point lists of legislative priorities that members of Congress still turn to when they want to know how small businesses feel about an issue.

—Denise Roach

□ *The budget:* Jim Miller, former director of the Office of Management and Budget, told operators about the nuances of the federal budget system and warned the crowd to stay on guard to protect business-meal deductibility from further deductions—an "easy hit" in budget talks, according to Miller.

□ *Mandated benefits:* Reps. George Miller (D-CA) and Vin Weber (R-MN) locked horns in a heated debate over mandated family and medical leave. Miller claimed that mandated leave was necessary to protect employees from inflexible employer policies. Weber countered that Congress should not mandate benefits that would "force businesspeople to cut costs."

□ *Teen employment:* Restaurateurs criticized Deputy Secretary of the Department of Labor (DOL) Rod DeArment for DOL's support for tougher teen-employment laws. Facing vocal complaints from operators, DeArment denied that DOL had unfairly targeted restaurants during its recent crackdown on employers who hire teenagers illegally.

□ *Education:* David Gergen, editor-at-large for *U.S. News and World Report*, praised the audience for the great strides restaurant owners have made in educating American youth. Comparing foodservice successes in training young adults to work with the federal government's inability to "seize control of our nation's destiny," Gergen challenged operators to volunteer to lead their communities in building a stronger U.S. educational system.

—Andrew McLauchlin

IT PAYS TO BE CLEAR ABOUT TAX-DEDUCTIBLE LOBBYING

by Mark E. Battersby

The average foodservice operator has good reason to feel helpless when facing law changes over which he or she does not seem to have a say. On the local level this feeling of being powerless is best illustrated by the restaurant owner who supports the campaign of a local official only to have that individual press to have parking meters installed in front of the owner's place of business after being elected.

Somewhat akin to the tickets that result from the local politician's idea to install parking meters are the tax laws that continually emerge from Washington DC and the many state capitals with, apparently, little input from those who will bear the brunt of those new taxes. Fortunately, tucked away in the massive federal tax laws is a little-used provision that permits a tax deduction for certain foodservice operations that lobby to have those parking meters removed, those tax laws repealed or changed or those local ordinances modified.

Two categories of tax-deductible lobbying

Specifically, under the present tax rules, an income tax deduction is allowed for most of the expenses that are related to appearances before and communications with any legislative body, legislative committee or even individual legislator. According to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) the two categories of tax-deductible lobbying expenses are:

(1) expenses incurred in direct connection with making appearances, submitting statements or sending communications and

(2) expenses incurred in direct connection with the communication of information between an individual taxpayer and an organization—of which he or she is a member—with respect to legislation or proposed legislation of direct interest to the taxpayer.

Naturally, to the extent that membership dues in any organization are used to fund either of the above categories, they, too, are tax deductible. But a prime requirement for a legitimate tax deduction is that the legislation or proposed legislation being lobbied for or against must be of "direct interest" to the person claiming the tax deduction. To be deductible, the lobbying expenses incurred must also satisfy the more general ordinary and necessary standard applicable to business deductions.

Legislation or proposed legislation is considered to be of direct interest to any foodservice operation if it is of such a nature that it may reasonably be expected to affect the operator's business—whether that effect will be beneficial or detrimental or whether it will be immediate or long term.

Obviously, legislation or proposed legislation is not of direct interest to the foodservice operation merely because it may affect business in general. Of course, if the legislation or proposed legislation affects the restaurateur's business, it is of direct interest even though it may also affect other taxpayers or businesses in general. On a somewhat more technical note, not all of the provisions of the legislation or proposed legislation need to affect the foodservice operation; one provision within the bill or plan will be enough to qualify the lobbying expense as an income tax deduction.

Meeting the direct-interest test

Legislation or proposed legislation that would meet the direct-interest test is that which would either increase or decrease the taxes that apply to the business, increase or decrease the general operating costs or increase or decrease the administrative burdens connected with the running of the operation. Naturally, there are many more possibilities, but

these should give the average restaurant owner an idea of what is and is not of direct interest to his or her particular operation.

In reality, it is the rare foodservice operator who has either the time or the patience to separate routine correspondence costs into the everyday tax-deductible business expenses and those that are related to lobbying. The cost of an appearance or the preparation of extensive background reports and data is a little easier to keep separate. For the most part, however, most lobbying expenses remain tucked away in the books and financial statements of the foodservice operation—at least until an IRS audit. Thus, it is important to know just what the IRS will accept as a lobbying expense—and what it won't—whether it is clearly marked on the income tax return or tucked away where only an accountant (or IRS auditor) can find it.

For instance, the lobbying-expense deduction rules contain two limitations: (1) no tax deduction is permitted for any amount paid or incurred for participating or intervening in any political campaign, and (2) no deduction is allowed for expenditures to influence the general public with respect to any legislation—if the written or verbal statements pertain to action by a legislative body; reflect a view on legislative action, either explicitly or implicitly; and are distributed to reach individuals as voters. Thus, amounts paid by a restaurant owner to local committee or groups to support or oppose state and local initiatives are not tax deductible, because the expenses are usually made in an attempt to influence the vote of the general public.

Under the existing tax laws it is permissible to attempt to swing the opinions of lawmakers, legislative bodies and even committees. But bringing pressure to bear by attempting to rally the public for or against a proposal—no matter how it will affect the foodservice operator's business—is not tax deductible. Similarly, contributions to an organization, or at least the portion used to attempt to influence the general public about legislation or proposed legislation, cannot be deducted.

In general, dues or contributions to political action campaigns (PACs) will not be deductible because those organizations are typically organized for campaigning. Occasionally, a PAC may concern itself with legislation. Dues or contributions made to such a PAC are tax-deductible business expenses only to the extent that they are attributable to neither the organization's attempts to influence legislation by urging the public to contact legislators nor to any campaigning.

Sample rulings

One IRS ruling denied a tax deduction for amounts spent by a foodservice corporation for printing and distributing to suppliers, customers and shareholders the text of its president's remarks before the state legislature in opposition to an environmental-protection bill. Similarly, costs incurred by a restaurant corporation in preparing and placing advertisements in major state newspapers and regional magazines setting forth objections to proposed bills were not deductible business expenses.

Two other IRS rulings focus on the question of whether certain actions constitute the forbidden "grassroots" lobbying. One tax-exempt trade organization encouraged its members to contact their employees and suppliers to have them, in turn, communicate with certain elected representatives to support repeal of legislation considered detrimental to the association. The organization was found to be engaging in "grassroots" lobbying because it went beyond its membership to urge the public to take action. Therefore, the lobbying expenses it incurred could not be deducted.

Conversely, a tax-exempt trade association was found not to be engaging in so-called "grassroots" lobbying when it urged its members to write or call their members of Congress to recommend that they support legislation of direct interest to the association. However, when such communications are directed at prospective members, such action is considered "grassroots" lobbying.

It goes without saying that in today's furor over ethics, neither direct nor indirect contributions made to political candidates or parties are tax deductible as business expenses. However, if contributions are made to a committee organized to bring a national political convention to the locality in which the restaurant or foodservice operation conducts business, those expenses are deductible—provided, of course, that they are made with a reasonable expectation of a commensurate financial return.

Regardless of the restaurateur's views on or use of advertising, no income tax deduction is allowed for amounts paid for advertising in the convention programs of a political party—no matter who publishes the program or who, ultimately, receives the advertising revenues.

That ban on tax deductions for indirect political contributions extends to advertising in publications other than political convention programs if any part of the proceeds directly or indirectly aids a political party or candidate. This same rule also bans deductions for amounts paid for admissions to any dinner or program if any part of the proceeds from the event directly or indirectly inures to, or for, the use of a political party or political candidate. Admission costs include any separate charge for food or drink. What's worse, this prohibition extends to other events such as galas, dances, theatrical or film presentations, cocktail parties, picnics, sporting events or similar affairs.

On the surface it might not appear to be worthwhile to separate routine lobbying expenses that would otherwise be written off as the normal costs of doing business. However, the IRS is becoming more and more demanding that deductions be itemized and broken down. Thus, entire deductions have been lost because too many "miscellaneous" expenses were included or too many personal or nondeductible expenses were tucked away with legitimate write-offs.

Staying within the permissible framework of the lobbying expense deduction rules will ensure that a tax write-off is available for those expenses. ❑

Mark E. Battersby is a tax and financial adviser, lecturer and writer with offices in Ardmore, Pennsylvania.

by Kathy Boyle

Trucks are part of a caterer's routine. They move food, tables, chairs, tablecloths, china, silverware flowers and party supplies to a party location. If items are not transported on time, or refrigeration fails, a caterer does not often get a second chance to win a client back. But trucks are not cheap. A new, refrigerated catering truck can range from $25,000 to well over $50,000, depending on its size and features. This is a substantial investment, and many caterers wonder if they should buy or rent.

CATERING VANS

TO RENT OR TO BUY

To rent

To avoid such a large capital expenditure, some caterers use rental vehicles, relying on their own car or small fleet of cars and vans for all events, except those that are far away or large. "For the last six years, we've had only have one truck, a cube van with an attic," says George Pfeil, general manager of Remus Catering in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Although the company is one of the largest caterers in that city (averaging one function a day), it owns only one dry truck. "We rent trucks every day,"

says Pfeil. (The company has found that the cost of the vehicle plus insurance and upkeep far outweighs the cost of rental.)

"Renting is a good option for us," says Pfeil. "Depending on the number of functions and what is required at each function, we determine the type of trucks we need to rent. However, if the cost of renting outweighs what you determine you will spend on purchasing a truck and maintaining it, then lease or buy!" Pfeil says the average rental cost is $75 per day plus an hourly fee for refrigeration and a fee for mileage.

When renting a truck is necessary, some successful small caterers have been able to pass along the cost of the rental to customers.

To buy

Caterers who believe in owning their own trucks cite availability—guaranteed access to refrigerated trucks when they need them—as the chief reason. One of the hardest things to rent in July, they quip, is a refrigerated truck. "Every caterer has his or her own operational needs, but we decided on ownership," says Chung Kim, vice president of purchasing for Ridgewell's Caterers in Bethesda, Maryland, the largest caterer in the nation's capital. Today, Ridgewell's fleet of trucks numbers approximately 40, about half of which are refrigerated. Ridgewell's trucks vary in size, but about 60 percent of its fleet consists of 18 to 20-foot trucks, and 40 percent consists of 12 to 16-foot trucks. The company also uses several mini-vans.

Most of these vehicles are customized. "With the amount of business we do in downtown Washington DC—where we have parking problems, different size loading docks and narrow alleys—we need narrow, short-body trucks that can easily maneuver in and out of alleys. Because our food and service requirements must usually be completed in two hours, we have to rely on smaller vehicles that can get around other larger trucks already situated at a loading dock or crowded into an alley or back parking area."

Balous Miller, president of Bill Miller Bar-B-Q in San Antonio, Texas, is another caterer who believes in owning his own trucks because of his special equipment.

Miller's fleet includes 20 vehicles, four of which are refrigerated. Thirteen of the 16 nonrefrigerated trucks are large, lift-gate vehicles, and three are passenger vans that can seat from eight to 12 people.

"All of my refrigerated trucks are customized in order to be a combination refrigeration/dry truck," explains Miller. "The trucks have a moveable bulkhead that allows us to vary the amount of refrigerated space. This is really important to us, since we may be going 300 miles to cater a party. We may want to store food items, such as raw fish, potato salad, coleslaw and meat in the refrigerated section, and put supplies, such as paper plates, napkins, bread, desserts, pies, cookies and beans, in the nonrefrigerated section."

Operators also believe that having their own refrigerated vehicle provides a greater margin of safety. Allan Elias, owner of Allan Elias Custom Catering in Minneapolis, Minnesota, has owned his own truck since starting his catering business 16 years ago. "I started with a refrigerated truck and have always owned my own trucks," explains Elias. Today, Elias owns nine vehicles—one power-lift dry truck, two refrigerated trucks, two mini-vans and four station wagons. "I feel owning is important, especially refrigerated trucks, to prevent foodborne illness. I like to have a little extra assurance and a built-in safety system." Elias uses refrigerated trucks to carry foods to events.

What to look for in a truck

Caterers agree that reliability and flexibility are key elements in purchasing a catering truck. Most importantly, caterers recommend identifying a specific list of their needs before buying.

□ **The "dry" truck.**
Most caterers opt for a "dry" truck, a multi-purpose, nonrefrigerated truck, to be the workhorse of their operations. Most say that these trucks can handle the range of catering needs, especially since today's holding containers, which can be adapted to create a refrigerator-like environment, can usually transport food safely to an event.

Here's what operators recommend looking for in these workhorses:

**The chassis.* The most important feature of a chassis is its reliability. "I want trucks that are easy to maintain and ones where the parts for repair are easily accessible," explains Kim of Ridgewell's. "Also, I want a truck that has a 10-year life. In the past, we had problems with service. Some of our trucks were in the dealer's shop for two weeks waiting for parts."

**Size.* Make sure the truck box is not longer than 20 to 22 feet. Larger trucks become difficult to drive and cannot easily turn at corners.

**Dual wheels in the back.* The dual wheels offer more stability and also allow for a heavier payload.

**Attic above the cab.* Operators note that small items can be packed efficiently in this otherwise lost space.

**A large, open, uninterrupted space.* Avoid trucks with wheel wells that cut into the cubic space available. A multipurpose open space is very useful for loading tables and other equipment. Some caterers even use the empty space in the truck as an on-site work area.

**Slotted, aluminum floor.* "A slotted, aluminum floor provides traction. I am very concerned about employee safety," explains Miller. "The truck floor gets wet during a party and I do

"I want trucks that are easy to maintain and ones where the parts for repair are easily accessible," explains Chung Kim of Ridgewell's.

not want an employee to fall. A floor with a system of ruts or slots really cuts down on injuries." The flooring should be removable for easy cleaning.

**Location of the doors.* Side doors can be handy for unloading items packed in the front of the truck before the back is unloaded.

**Lift gate.* This elevator-like device allows items to be moved from the truck to the ground with less employee lifting.

**Lighting.* A truck should be well lit; and if possible, there should be a switch by the exit door.

**Bumpers.* It may be a good idea to consider heavy-duty bumpers to prevent body damage to the truck.

**Extra-strength covers for outside corners of truck.* These extra-strength covers can help prevent damage from trees in older residential neighborhoods.

**Ability to secure items inside a less-than-full truck.* Devices known as spring-loaded pogo sticks can fit across the inside of the truck at intervals to hold cargo securely in place.

**Truck lining.* An extra metal layer of truck lining, or skin, inside the truck keeps items from bashing through the truck's outside layer. It also improves cleanability.

**Panel trucks and passenger vans.* Panel trucks or passenger vans with removable seats can often do double duty—carrying a crew of workers to a site, or if the equipment needs are great, the vehicles can be used without the seats to carry supplies.

□ **Refrigeration options.** After purchasing the truck chassis, caterers work with a local customized refrigeration or fabrication company to put a refrigerated box on the truck chassis.

There are three basic types of refrigerated options:

1. A self-contained refrigeration unit with its own built-in generator. This type of unit can operate without auxiliary power, but it is sometimes equipped for auxiliary, stand-by needs, which allows it to be plugged into a local power source.

2. Stand-by. A stand-by refrigeration unit is designed to be plugged into either a 110-volt or 220-volt power source. Some versions of this type of refrigeration unit can run off a truck's motor, just like air conditioning. These units work well in vans and vehicles up to one ton.

3. Plug-in cold-plate units. A plug-in cold-plate unit is a freezer coil that is installed within the unit and keeps food cold for 12 to 24 hours. These units are positioned on the top of the inside of the truck, allowing the cold air to fall. However, they are virtually worthless in situations where doors are repeatedly opened and closed.

Prices vary, and operators note they do not always need all the options. That is why they suggest matching the company's specific needs to the type of refrigeration they will need on a routine basis. "Customizing companies can fabricate almost any kind of refrigerated box for the back of the truck you want," says Balous Miller.

Suggestions already mentioned for the dry truck—truck lining, type of floor, type of door, lights and liftgate—apply to refrigerated boxes as well. Other things to look for include:

**Flexible size of refrigerated box.* Some operators like boxes with a moveable bulkhead to vary the amount of refrigerated space. This type of box cuts down on the amount of fuel necessary to cool the refrigerated portion of the space.

**Guard rails on the inside walls of the box.* Caterers use mobile carts to roll foods and supplies onto refrigerated trucks. A guard rail cuts down on damage to the inside of the refrigerated box from these carts.

**Drains.* Drains allow for daily cleaning to meet sanitation requirements.

**Height of refrigerated box.* The height of the refrigerated box should be considered in relation to the geographic areas in which it will be used. "In older neighborhoods with cherry trees and other low trees our trucks take a lot of body damage, so we prefer trucks that are not too tall," notes Kim.

**An adequate training program.* Finally, all truck purchases should include an adequate training program for employees. "Employees should know how and where to add fuel to keep the refrigeration going, which gas stations carry propane and diesel fuels, how to maintain proper temperatures inside the trucks and when to report malfunctions so a vehicle will be properly serviced," explains Elias.

Adds Kim: "Because of toughened Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations it is now a law that drivers keep a daily log or manifest for safety. Each day our drivers check out brakes, lights, horns and seat belts to make sure they are working properly."

Consider a used vehicle

If a new truck is too expensive, you may want to consider a used vehicle. According to Elias, there are a number of ways to find out about good buys in used trucks—from talking to banks to visiting leasing companies to trading classified advertisements. "You have to pay attention to what is happening in the community. Basically, you want others in the community to know you are looking for a truck," says Elias.

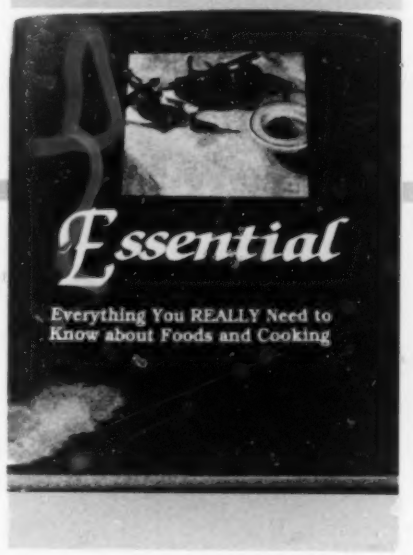
"I look for low mileage in the used trucks I purchase," he adds. Most important, however, when buying a used truck is to have it thoroughly checked by a mechanic or expert. "It is well worth the few hundred dollars it may cost to have an expert look the equipment over," says Elias. ❑

Kathy Boyle is a writer in Rockville, Maryland.

ESSENTIALS FROM

CONCEPT TO CLEAN-UP

The Essential Cook was a 1989 winner in the writings category in the International Association of Cooking Professionals/Seagram Food and Beverage Book Competition. Competition judges told author Charles Delmar that had this writings category not existed, they would have created one for his book. Just how and why *The Essential Cook* came to be and what it holds for the foodservice professional are topics Delmar discussed with ***Restaurants USA*** staff contributor Jennifer Batty.



When Charles Delmar decided to write *The Essential Cook: Everything You REALLY Need to Know about Foods and Cooking*, a friend asked him where he "got off" trying to write a book about cooking when he didn't even know how to cook himself. After all, pointed out his friend, these cooking techniques are learned by master chefs through years of training. "I told him, 'That's what I'm trying to figure out,' and my friend said, 'Oh, you'll never do it.' But I did," beams Delmar.

Just what is it that Delmar has done? He's written a book that has been applauded by novices as well as restaurateurs, chefs, cookbook writers and food critics. One New York City caterer told him she had to buy two copies of his book because the staff was fighting over the first copy. A chef in Florida dragged Delmar back to his kitchen and confided that he "learned something different every time" he looked at the book. Others have said that his book has become the basic reference for their cooking and writing endeavors.

Some of these professionals complain that Delmar is giving away trade secrets. "You know that common theory that if you ask a cook for a recipe, he will hold out an ingredient so that you won't be able to duplicate it? I don't think that's true; the problem is that chefs communicate on a different level, because of their knowledge of food; that's why most people just don't understand. You can follow a recipe to the letter, and it still won't taste the way it did when someone else made it. You have to understand the basics first."

For those who turn their backs on a frying pan

So that is what Delmar put in his book—the essentials, the basics. "I wrote this book for the absolute ninny—for those people like me who turn their backs on a frying pan and it then catches on fire. (It still happens to me, by the way.) Now, you wouldn't turn your back on a hot frying pan if you knew what you were doing, but no cookbook will tell you not to turn your back on that pan. Mine will," says Delmar.

There are even sections in *The Essential Cook* on how to boil water and how to open a can—first you wash the can, then open it, then wash the can opener and put it away. These are truly basics, so how has *The Essential Cook* become so essential to many foodservice professionals? Even Delmar is surprised. "I

am overwhelmed by the response, shocked, because I didn't write it for them."

Delmar does admit, however, that there is a section in his book for almost every kind of foodservice professional. Managers will appreciate the chapters on safety and sanitation, chefs may find useful material in his chapter on combination cookery, and servers and kitchen staff could benefit from a thorough understanding of the basics. "They [foodservice professionals] may not agree with all that's in the book, but anything they don't agree with, they will at least find provocative," he says.

Delmar points to chapter two as the most important one in his book about cooking and "the most valuable one for professionals. Any serious chef—serious enough to be above snobbery—can't help but read this chapter and come away with greater insight," he says with confidence.

"Foodservice professionals have been taught that there are two ways to cook—dry cooking and wet cooking. Foods cooked in oil are included in dry cooking, but that doesn't make any sense. If you put your finger in a bottle of Wesson, it's not dry, it's wet.

"I rethought this concept after doing research and came up with three ways of cooking: cooking in liquids, cooking in dry heat and cooking in fat." This concept is covered in chapter two, as are baking and roasting—two other confusing and misused terms.

"Knowing basic definitions and distinctions between terms is the first step toward avoiding confusion and controlling what you do." What Delmar set out to do in chapter two of his book is to write definitions that hold up. But the book has much greater scope than this chapter. What Delmar included goes back to the idea for the book itself.

How the book came to be

Delmar wasn't much of a cook when he found himself living alone for the first time at age 35; so he looked for help. "I couldn't find a [cook] book I could understand," he recalls.

In 1975 he bought *The Cook's Companion* for $1, and it was the first cookbook Delmar had found that explained some of the basics, such as what kind of chicken to buy. He began buying more cookbooks until he had more than 200, but he still couldn't find the definitive text he was seeking.

As a sales and editorial representative for Wadsworth, a textbook publisher in Belmont, California, Delmar had access to many books used in cooking schools. "None of them were for lay people. They were dull textbooks for professional cooks, but they covered things like the difference between frying in peanut oil or butter.

"I'm a teacher at heart (as a salesman of college textbooks I count myself as a teacher), so I rephrased this material for lay people. The difference between my book and other cookbooks is the difference between a book written by a teacher and one written by an expert. Experts assume they know everything and assume everyone else does, too; teachers assume you know nothing and account for it," Delmar explains.

Delmar spent 10 years conducting research and writing *The Essential Cook* and two years producing it himself. He read the tips and hints on cooking in newspapers and magazines, and he spoke to home economics teachers, professional and "mama" cooks and other foodservice professionals. He even asked the opinion of an organic chemist he visited on a sales call.

But he mostly learned about his topic by doing it wrong. A recipe, Delmar contends, begins in the middle of the cooking process. It doesn't tell you how to find the item called for in the recipe, clean it and store it. "I would cook for my friends and someone would say, 'No, dummy, that's not how you do it. You do it like this.' This stuff isn't in cookbooks because 'everyone' knows how to do it. It's like asking someone how you cook a steak; they look at you really funny because everyone already knows that. Who is this 'everyone'?"

The items Delmar felt he needed to cover in his book kept growing, as friends, chefs and teachers suggested additional topics or hints that needed to be included. "This has been a group project of hundreds of people," he says.

"It took me years to pull the chapter on vegetables together; the information came from about 10 different books because no one book has it all. And if someone served me an artichoke, I would ask them about it." What he discovered was that books gave different instructions on how to prepare the same item and that cooks also had varying techniques for preparing similar meals. "I love writing, teaching and organizing stuff, and I recognized as a problem that the cooking world ain't very well organized. (Now that I'm an award-winning writer I can use the word ain't.)"

Cooking concentrates on similarities

Part of his thinking process involves the themes of cooking. "It's a concentration on similarities. Recipes are but variations on a common theme. No one bothers to tell anyone the real themes—that recipes are endless combinations of general procedures. Yet, this is the way professionals cook, how they were taught in their cooking schools.

"There is so much more to cooking than just following a recipe. Pastrymakers don't just follow the recipe—they account for such things as the weight of the flour. Your grandmama could reach down into the flour bin without using a measuring cup and shake out the flour until it felt just right. This is how good cooks do it," notes Delmar. "Again, I focused on the similarities; recipes focus on the differences. Good cooks come to be good by knowing the similarities."

But today people don't grow up learning at their mother's side, he says. "Home economics classes don't teach the basics anymore, or they teach about the differences between a carbohydrate and a protein. Well, I don't eat carbohydrates and proteins; I eat bananas and raisins and meat. These concepts needed to be put into terms people would understand."

Why would people want to understand these ideas? As consumers eat out more and experiment with ethnic and regional dishes, they will want to

"Home economics classes don't teach the basics anymore, or they teach about the differences between a carbohydrate and a protein. Well, I don't eat carbohydrates and proteins; I eat bananas and raisins and meat. These concepts needed to be put into terms people would understand."

recreate that experience at home, Delmar suggests. Unfortunately, as people depend more and more on the well-prepared meals found outside the home, they forget or don't bother to learn the basics of cooking. So reliving that fabulous meal via their own two hands could be an arduous task.

"These people cook only when it is essential. That's why I gave them the basics they really need. I organized it very logically. There's a book called *Cooking A to Z*, but the world's not organized alphabetically or by recipes, but by subjects like yeast or chicken." The basics are so important, emphasizes Delmar, because in

THICKENERS

Almost by definition, any hot sauce is simply a seasoned liquid that is thickened. The liquid used for cooking stews or braises, for example, is made not only less runny but also more flavorful with the addition of cornstarch or a roux or some other thickener in order to bind the ingredients to make what most of us would identify as a casserole. And of course, any liquid that is used as a topping for foods should be thickened in some way so that it can cling to the surface of foods and not soak into them.

The thickness of any hot sauce will be determined by the characteristics of the thickener as well as the amount, so you should know as much as you can about each one. Also when making a hot sauce, it is better to make it thicker than desired and then thin it if necessary. It is easier and takes less time to thin a thick sauce than to thicken one that is too thin. Remember, though, that any hot sauce will thicken as it cools.

Thickening by reducing the liquid.
Reducing is certainly the easiest way to thicken any liquid. Lately, more and more people, especially diet-conscious folk, have been using this method because it thickens liquids without adding calories or fats. The more a liquid is reduced, the less additional thickener it will require.

To reduce a liquid, simply simmer it in an uncovered container to evaporate some of its water content. The greater the surface area of the liquid, the faster it will be reduced. A major consideration with this method is that the flavors of the liquid become more concentrated as it is reduced.

Cooked and pureed vegetables.
Cooked and pureed vegetables, especially onions and potatoes, can be used to thicken liquids and give them more flavor. Brown sauces and sauces for braises and stews, for example, are often thickened with a puree of their flavoring vegetables. Since the thickening ability varies with the vegetable, it is best to start by using one tablespoon per cup of liquid, adding more as needed.

Starch thickeners.
Dry thickeners from the starch family—flour, cornstarch, potato starch and arrowroot—are the thickeners that are used most often to thicken casseroles, stews, white sauces, brown sauces and gravies. Flour is the most commonly used by far, but cornstarch, arrowroot and potato starch can all be substituted for it. In fact, cornstarch has come to be favored over flour by many cooks because it doesn't have the starchy taste of flour. Consequently, it doesn't require cooking in added fat, as flour does, to eliminate its starchy taste.

Starches other than flour all have about twice the thickening power of flour. If you want to substitute cornstarch or one of the other starches for flour, simply use half as much. For each cup of liquid, use flour in the following amounts (or half these amounts for other starches): *thin sauce*, 1½ Tbs. flour; *medium-thick sauce*, 1½ to 3 Tbs. flour; *thick sauce*, 3 to 4 Tbs. flour.

—*Excerpted with permission from* The Essential Cook

order to follow a recipe or modify or redo it, a person has to understand the cooking processes. That goes for professionals as well as novices.

"I've had people tell me this book is so logical and ask, 'Why hasn't anybody done it this way before?' I say, 'I don't know.'"

Delmar made the decision to publish the book himself so that he could have total control over the product and include everything he wanted to, such as a section on how to clean the kitchen. The house pictured on the spine of the book is Hill House, a Japanese house he designed and lives in in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

There are loving touches Delmar gave to his book, using his more than 20 years of publishing experience. The book's cover is laminated, so that grease splattered on it won't show; and when the jacket wears out, the leather cover is plastic-coated for durability.

COOKING CONSIDERATIONS FOR STARCHES

1. To avoid lumps, never add a dry starch directly to hot fat or liquid. Instead, dissolve the thickener in cool liquid to make what is called a *wash* or in warm fat to make what is called a *roux*. Then add the wash or roux to the remaining liquid.

2. For maximum thickening, heat liquids containing starches to a slow simmer, stirring them frequently.

3. All-purpose flour and bread flour are the two most frequently used dry thickeners. Unless flour is cooked a long time in liquid, or first cooked in fat to make a roux, it will produce sauces with a starchy taste.

4. Cornstarch and arrowroot produce sauces that are clear and glossy without any starchy taste. They are best suited for sweet sauces and glazes but are also good for making gravy and for thickening casseroles, braises and stews.

5. To substitute another starch for flour, use half the amount of flour called for.

6. High temperatures or excessive stirring will cause sauces thickened with arrowroot or potato starch to thin.

—*from* The Essential Cook

"Books are very personal things, and I wanted my readers to be able to personalize their books," he says. So Delmar made the margins on the outside of the pages wide enough for readers to "talk back to the book," and the print is large and readable. Artists collaborated with him on the drawings. One of the artists "read the book and illustrated from the perspective of a learner," he says.

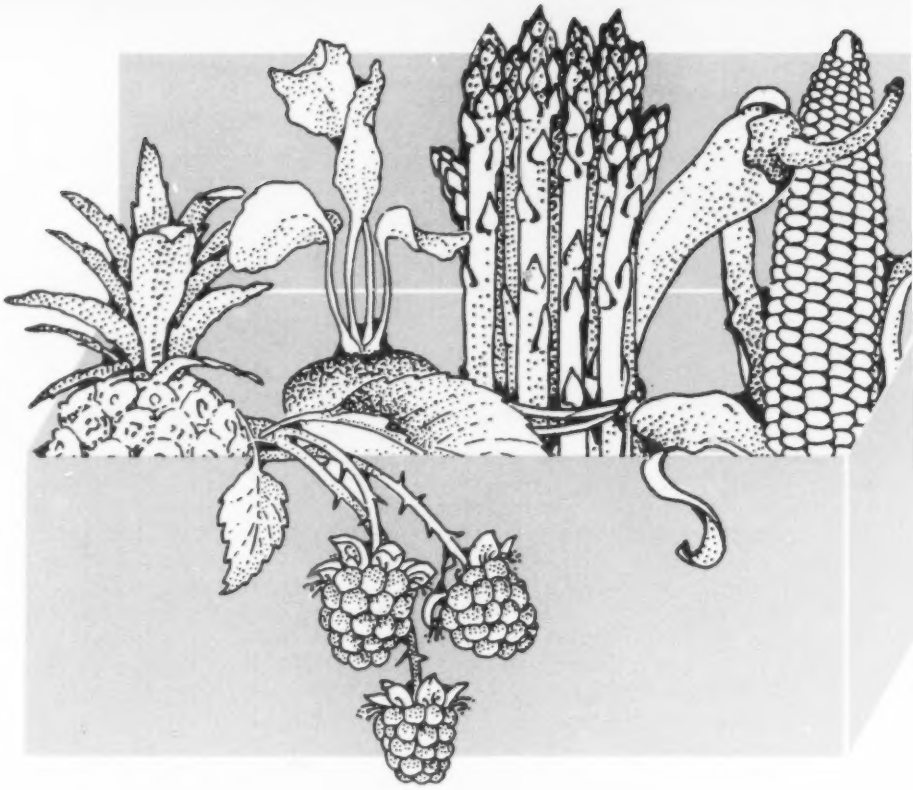
So far the book isn't selling that well, says Delmar. "Some people look at it and see that it isn't a recipe book and think, 'If it ain't got recipes, what could it have?'" Moreover, the influx of cookbooks into the market is tremendous, with more than 1,000 books published the same year as Delmar's. He says he tries to comfort himself by remembering that *The Joy of Cooking* didn't sell very well at first; but when you "have a quarter of your life and all your money invested," it's hard not to worry. "I may end up losing everything I have; but if I do, I'll start over on a new adventure," he says.

And there are already new adventures in the works. In the next year or two Delmar expects to publish two more books that expand on chapters in *The Essential Cook*. The first one will be called *How Good Cooks Do It (and Other Facts of Life): What Cooks Need to Know About Cooking Basics*, and the second one will be titled *First You Steal a Chicken: What Cooks Really Need to Know About Foods and How to Fix Them*. He is in the process of trying to find a major publisher to produce them.

Delmar believes he has the necessary credentials to get backing because he is not a gourmet cook. "I'm an essential cook—an O.K. cook. I'm not an imaginative or creative cook," he says. "I have fun with cooking and don't take it that seriously. That's what I'd like my readers to do too."❑

Editor's note: *For readers of* ***Restaurants USA,*** *Charles Delmar is offering* The Essential Cook, *which is normally priced at $24.95, for $20 (including shipping and handling.) He is accepting credit-card sales only at 1-800-826-8899.*

"The difference between my book and other cookbooks is the difference between a book written by a teacher and one written by an expert. Experts assume they know everything and assume everyone else does, too; teachers assume you know nothing and account for it."



NUTRITION
SLIPS INTO THE CATERING WORLD

Fresh. Simpler. Lighter. Flavorful. These are the adjectives that describe the foods a growing health-conscious public is requesting of caterers.

by Gloria Satur

As awareness of the relationship between nutrition and health continues to increase, consumers are asking more questions about the foods they eat and the potential effect on their health. As Allan Elias, owner of Allen Elias Custom Catering in Minneapolis, Minnesota, emphasizes, "It's a stay-well generation of consumers out there."

However, these same consumers are also insisting on food that does not compromise on taste or appearance. This desire to have it both ways—good food and good health—has started to influence catered meals.

Consumer interests up close

How are consumer interests influencing caterers?

□ *Fresh.* Consumers advocate using fresh products close to their natural state to help ensure both a higher-quality product and optimal flavor. Caterers are responding by using local, regional and seasonal ingredients.

□ *Simpler.* Today's culinary emphasis on "back to the basics" has caterers adapting and simplifying foods. Uncomplicated cooking preparations, such as grilling, stir-frying, steaming and poaching are examples of techniques that are being used to bring out the flavors of foods.

□ *Lighter.* Although there will always be a market for a 12-oz. steak with potatoes and gravy, the emphasis is increasingly on lighter foods. More oil-based sauces and dressings, marinades, fruit mustards, vinaigrettes and relishes are being utilized to lighten up catered fare. Customers are also requesting leaner cuts of meat and smaller portions.

□ *Flavorful.* No longer satisfied with a plain piece of baked fish or chicken, customers are demanding more highly flavored foods. To meet the desire for healthier fare without sensual deprivation, caterers are turning to ethnic foods for inspiration. Popular choices are Thai foods, which combine and contrast the sensations of spicy, sweet and sour by using such exotic herbs and seasonings as lemon grass, cilantro, ginger, coconut and chili peppers, and Southwestern dishes that rely on chilis, beans, grains and corn.

The major interests expressed by consumers include foods lower in fat, cholesterol and sodium. Customers are asking for these healthier options in a variety of ways. Bruce Potter, owner of Hillcrest Catering in Waltham, Massachusetts, says that guests invited to the social affairs he caters often call in advance to ask for a vegetarian or fish-dish substitution. "Most people expect a chicken or roast beef entree at a wedding," he explains. "These special requests can represent up to 10 to 15 percent of a guest list of 120 to 150 people."

John William Schenk, chef-owner of J. William's Caterers in Evergreen, Colorado, reports that his affluent and somewhat older customers often request specific recipes to meet their family's nutritional needs. "In that case, I'll test their recipes and make any adjustments I may feel are necessary, keeping in mind restrictions I need to adhere to," says Schenk.

Marsha Levine, co-partner in Party Fare, Inc., in Tampa, Florida, caters to local Fortune 500 companies that have begun to set their own nutri-

tional guidelines. One company no longer allows red meat on its menu. Another allows no desserts, such as pastries, cakes or cookies. And a third demands a cholesterol-free menu.

Although such requests are by no means a homogeneous trend, there are some definite directions. Variables include the type of function, the size of the party and the location.

An individual choice vs. a group function

"When customers have the opportunity to choose for themselves, they are making healthier food choices," declares Amy Zintl, director of sales and marketing for Creative Gourmets in Boston.

Creative Gourmets keeps up with consumer interests by including a salt substitute with its meals as well as sauces and condiments on the side. It also features lighter menu alternatives. One popular item is a boneless, skinless breast of chicken, marinated in lemon tarragon and grilled. Served cold, it is cut on the bias and fanned out. A favorite salad is green beans served with a Thai-style dressing and fresh coconut. "When repeat customers are asked why they keep coming back, it's often because of the lighter foods that we offer," notes Zintl.

Zintl adds that the trend is not as apparent at group functions, when a meeting planner must accommodate the interests of a diverse group. "Special events are also seen as a time to indulge," she says.

Michael Roman, president of the National Institute for Off Premise Catering in Chicago, concurs. "In smaller purchases for corporations—lunches for example—there is a blossoming concern for nutrition and good-quality food," he says. "However, if someone's daughter is getting married or an uncle is celebrating a 40th birthday, people tend to throw nutrition to the wind. They don't want the possibility of offending someone, so they play if safe."

Meeting the challenge

Caterers such as Creative Gourmets and John William Schenk believe they are successfully meeting the challenge of catering healthier meals. In lieu of a hollandaise sauce, for example, Schenk serves steamed asparagus with a wild-berry yogurt dip.

GINGER-PEANUT DIP WITH RAW VEGETABLES

Yields about 2 cups

Ingredients:
1¾ cups creamy peanut butter
2 medium onions, chopped
6 garlic cloves, minced
6 Tbs. fresh lemon juice
¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
4 tspns. grated fresh ginger
4 tspns. soy sauce
2 tspns. dried red pepper flakes
2 tspns. turmeric

Method:
Combine all ingredients in a blender or food processor and puree until smooth. Add water to thin, if necessary. Transfer to bowl. Serve peanut dip with vegetables, such as blanched Chinese long beans, snow peas, peeled jicama, water chestnuts, carrots and celery.

Nutritional analysis per Tbs.(32 per recipe): 87.6 cal., 3.3 g. carb., 4.2 g. protein, 7.2 g. fat, 110.4 mg. sodium, 0 mg. cholesterol

—Allan Elias Custom Catering

One of his "light" specialties is grilled duck breast with raspberry mustard. Very ripe raspberries are cooked with Sauvignon or Fume Blanc wine and lemon zest. They are then pressed through a sieve and whole-grain pommery mustard is stirred in. This condiment is served with a duck breast that has been marinated overnight in cilantro, mint, coarse black pepper and olive oil, and has been grilled medium-rare.

For another mustard-based dish, Schenk combines fresh ripe peaches with wine champagne vinegar, sugar and mustard. He serves the mustard with sliced grilled chicken breast and garnishes the dish with a blanched, fanned peach half.

Relishes are another substitute for heavy cream-based sauces. A pineapple-papaya relish, for example, is a flavorful accompaniment to grilled halibut, mahi mahi or salmon. Schenk combines diced pineapple and papaya with red bell pepper and red onion and then cooks this mixture with red wine vinegar, sorrel, salt, pepper and extra-virgin olive oil. "The combinations and options are limitless once you being thinking of alternative ways to season and flavor foods," notes Schenk.

Michael Roman adds that another positive use of nutrition is to serve fresh fruit or fruit kebobs at mid-afternoon meeting breaks. "Four years ago we sold a tremendous amount of cheese trays," relates Allan Elias of Allan Elias Custom Catering. "Today our cheese-platter consumption is down by 35 to 45 percent. Instead, we're now receiving requests for fruit and vegetable trays." The fresh fruit is paired with a honey-yogurt dip. The raw vegetables go well with a ginger-peanut dip, and a hummus dip is served with pita bread. "These dishes are being requested both as hors d'oeuvres or as afternoon alternatives to cookies and bars," says Elias.

When it comes to desserts, customers still are apt to go all out, especially if it's a celebratory occasion. However, the lighter trend has even filtered into this domain. "Although we still do a lot of heavy desserts," notes Elias, "they're not moving out of here like they used to." His lighter options include baked apple served with a light caramel-and-brandy sauce or a fresh-fruit dessert. At Creative Gourmets orders are up for fruit tarts, crumbs and crisps. "Fruit sorbets are also very popular," adds Zintl, "especially at dinners, because they are perceived as being elegant."

Marketing healthy eating

Although it's readily acknowledged that people do not want "health" pushed down their throats, caterers today are trying to anticipate consumer interest in lighter foods. Some are incorporating this new lighter style of cooking into their philosophy, whereas others offer a few lighter alternatives to give consumers a choice. But everyone is quick to add that healthful menu alternatives should not differ from regular menu items in quality, taste, appearance and price. "You can't make people pay more for items because they're good for them," notes Zintl. "If it costs more, you're going to lose that market." ❑

Gloria Satur is a food and nutrition consultant in Washington DC.

FRESH VINAIG FOR T

The humble salad has been r and herbs, a variety of vegeta array of tan

by Ja

Until recently, the tossed salad was a neglected aspect of the menu. Chefs and guests alike gave little thought to the ingredients or dressings. Customers weren't given much of a choice, while chefs devoted their valuable time to developing other portions of the menu.

A bounty of lettuces

The days of restaurants offering the same basic house salads and dressings are over. A bounty of dark, nutritious leaf lettuces, such as red and green leaf lettuce, romaine, escarole, endive, red oak and Boston bibb lettuce, have become widely available, and they offer appealing textures, tastes and nutrients.

Tom Thumb butterhead, buttercrunch and lamb's ear—although not as plentiful—are also ideal for additions to salads, as are swiss chard, arugula, spinach, radicchio, curly endive and kale.

The best way to incorporate these greens into the salad is to mix two or three varieties together. Red swiss chard adds strong flavor to a salad of romaine and green leaf lettuce. Mildly flavored bibb lettuce benefits from the addition of sharply flavored spinach or escarole. Radicchio adds vivid color and a slight bitterness.

Once the core of the tossed salad has been selected, it's time to add a colorful selection of fruits and vegetables for flavor and texture. At my restaurant, I offer small amounts of a variety of fresh ingredients, including alfalfa sprouts, red onions, cherry tomatoes, shredded carrots and red cabbage, sliced mushrooms, slivered almonds, cashews, pine nuts, blanched broccoli, diced apples and pears, cucumbers and bell peppers. Occasionally, I offer optional toppings, such as minced jalapeno peppers, sprigs of fresh basil, mint, arugula, watercress, diced pineapples, Asian pears and tomatillos.

A creative momentum

The next stage is the dressing—and here is where the discovery of fresh fruit vinaigrettes has added a creative momentum. Inspired by the popularity of Dijon vinaigrette in the 1980s, fresh fruit vinaigrettes are quick and easy to make and full of invigorating flavors. Fruit vinaigrettes also appeal to health-minded customers, as they are prepared with about half as much oil as most salad dressings.

I first discovered the culinary potential of fruit vinaigrettes when I was in the midst of making a batch of chutney. While chopping mangoes, papayas and pineapples, I was contemplating a new house dressing for the restaurant's menu. In a moment of inspired adventure, I changed course and made the chutney into a vinaigrette. I simmered the fruit in vinegar, pureed the mixture, drizzled oil into it and then chilled the dressing. I offered the tropical-fruit vinaigrette that night, and guests loved it.

I soon began offering a rotating selection of fresh fruit vinaigrettes as house dressings, featuring a variety of fresh fruits with fresh herbs and honey. Customers often asked to purchase some to take home with them after the meal.

Once I began preparing fresh fruit vinaigrettes, I was emancipated from the large plastic vats of salad dressings that I, and every other res-

PLUM-NECTARINE VINAIGRETTE

Yields 4 cups

Ingredients:
4 plums, diced
3 nectarines, diced
1¼ cup vinegar
¼ cup honey
⅛ tspn. salt
⅛ tspn. white pepper
¾ cup olive or other vegetable oil
3 tspn. fresh minced mint or basil

Method:
Place the plums, nectarines and vinegar in a nonreactive saucepan and cook for about 10 minutes over medium heat. Cool mixture in refrigerator for about 30 minutes.

Add fruit mixture, honey and seasonings to a food processor fitted with a steel blade. Blend for 20 to 30 seconds or until mixture is smooth. Slowly drizzle in the oil while the motor is running. Process for 15 to 20 seconds more. Whisk in herbs.*

Nutritional analysis per Tbs. (64 Tbs. per recipe): 32.6 cal., 2.6 g. carb., 2.5 g. fat, 4.3 mg. sodium, 0.1 g. protein, 0 mg. cholesterol

-FRUIT
RETTES
HE'90S

juvenated with fresh, leafy greens
oles and fruits, and an innovative
y fruit vinaigrettes.

y Solomon

taurant on the block, was serving. I could also boast that our salad dressings were free of the latent sweeteners, turbo-calories and chemical additives that are prevalent in many commercial dressings.

A simple base

As with the Dijon vinaigrette—which is the simple marriage of oil, vinegar and Dijon mustard—fresh fruit vinaigrettes are made from a variety of vinegars and oils. Vinegar, which is French for "soured wine," is usually made from red wine or white wine, sherry, rice wine, apple cider or champagne. All can be used for vinaigrettes, but I prefer red wine vinegar. The degree of tartness can be tailored to taste by adding slightly more vinegar for more tartness or more oil for a smoother finish.

Balsamic vinegar, which is aged longer and is less acidic than most vinegars, is the superior—but most expensive—vinegar to use for a vinaigrette. I recommend balsamic vinegar when food cost is not a consideration.

TROPICAL-FRUIT VINAIGRETTE

Yields 4 cups

Ingredients:
1 papaya, seeded, peeled and diced
1 mango, peeled, pitted and diced
1 kiwi, peeled and diced
1 cup diced fresh pineapple
1½ cups red wine vinegar
⅛ cup honey
¼ tspn. salt
¼ tspn. white pepper
1¼ cups vegetable oil

Method:
Place papaya, mango, kiwi, pineapple, and vinegar in a nonreactive saucepan and cook for 5 to 7 minutes over medium heat. Cool mixture in refrigerator for about 30 minutes.

Add fruit mixture, honey and seasonings to a food processor fitted with a steel blade. Blend for 20 to 30 seconds or until mixture is smooth. Slowly drizzle in the oil while the motor is running, and process for 10 to 20 seconds more.*

Nutritional analysis per Tbs. (64 Tbs. per recipe): 45.6 cal., 2.4 g. carb., 4.1 g. fat, < 0.1 g. protein, 8.7 mg. sodium, 0 mg. cholesterol

Olive oil is the healthiest oil to use for a vinaigrette, as it contains the greatest percentage of mono-unsaturated fats. Soybean oil with a blend of olive oil is adequate for most vinaigrettes and less expensive. Flavored oils, such as walnut, peanut and avocado, are ideal for delicate salads, but they may be overpowered by the strongly flavored fruit vinaigrettes.

Inspire dressings

In addition to adding a splash of color and flavor to tossed salads, these velvety vinaigrettes enhance a variety of meals. They may be drizzled over steamed asparagus, carrots, beets, broccoli or artichokes, adding a nuance of flavor and replacing the traditional butter or salt at the same time. They also add zest to grilled chicken or pork entrees and can make a light, delectable dressing for a pasta salad with chicken, broccoli, tomatoes and carrots.

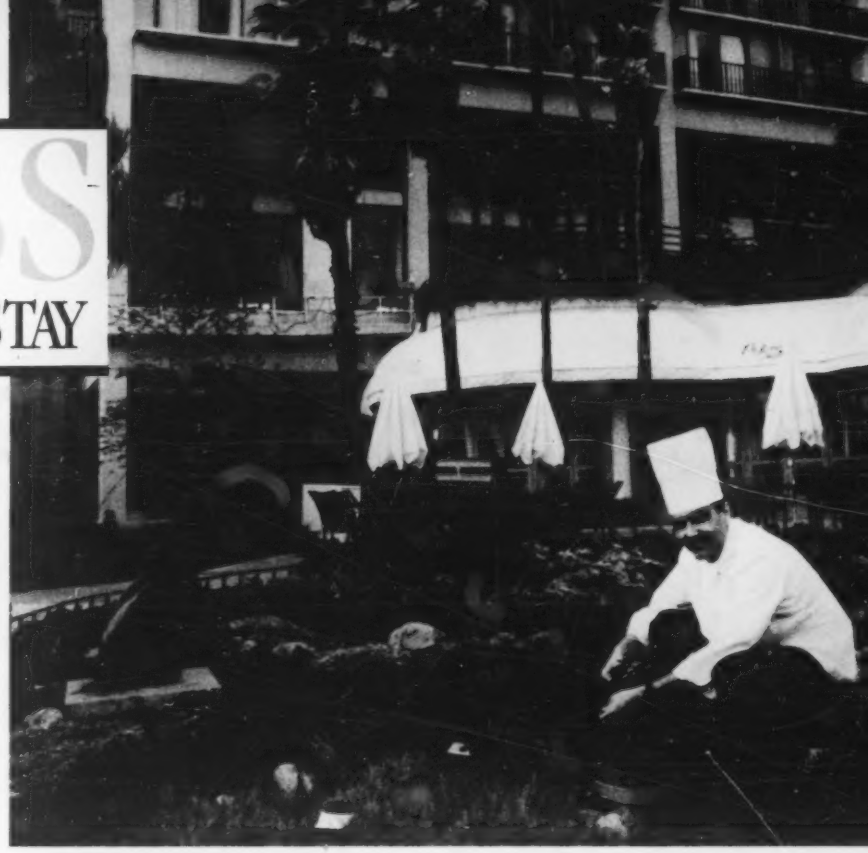
Fresh fruit vinaigrettes can inspire hearty lunch salads as well. For a tropical salad, diced papaya, mango, pineapple and shredded coconut can be added to the nucleus of leafy greens and then served with a tropical-fruit vinaigrette. For a salad with a southwestern flair, leafy greens can be tossed with sprigs of cilantro, minced jalapeno peppers, corn kernels, salsa, shredded jicama and raspberry or plum-nectarine vinaigrette. A fruit salad of diced papaya, banana, Asian pear and pineapple, tossed with a plum-nectarine or apricot-rhubarb vinaigrette, is a jazzy alternative to a rich dessert.

Serving the fruit vinaigrette on the side in a small glass pitcher is an attractive way to showcase the extravagant dressing. Allowing the customer to spoon the dressing over the salad unfailingly pleases customers and also displays the restaurant's attractive tossed salad, undoubtedly creating a memorable impression. ❑

*Serve the dressing immediately or refrigerate. If kept refrigerated, the vinaigrette should keep for 1 to 2 weeks.

Jay Solomon is the author of Condiments! Chutneys, Relishes, and Table Sauces, *published this fall by The Crossing Press, Freedom, CA 95019. He is also the chef/owner of Jay's Clinton Hall Cafe in Ithaca, New York.*

HERBS ARE HERE TO STAY



by Dennis Blank

The morning air is crisp as executive chef Heinz Hautle walks along a red brick pathway cut between an immaculately groomed lawn and dome-covered gazebos. He stops to look over the gardens. Something new has been added between the low-cut shrubs.

Under his direction, gardeners have put in decorative herb gardens. There is a selection of chives, basil, sage, rosemary, thyme and other herbs. For Hautle, who oversees the gourmet cuisine at the Hotel Hershey in Hershey, Pennsylvania, using fresh herbs to satisfy the palates of customers is not only fun but also a challenge. "It's back to the basics, really," Hautle explains. "Herbs enhance the flavor of food."

Using fresh-grown herbs to season food and to accentuate plate decorations is as natural as breathing to this happy chef. "God created herbs to add pleasure to life and cooking," he says. Hautle enjoys using fresh lovage "fairly sparingly" along with onions and celery in his soup pots, but his favorite way to use herbs is to add them to cooking oils. "We heat up the oil. After it gets hot, we take it off the fire and let it cool," he explains. It is at that point that a four-ounce fresh-cut herb, such as tarragon or rosemary, is added. (There is too much danger of the herb being burnt if it were added while the oil was on the fire, he notes.) An example of a dish Hautle serves his patrons is *Roast Supreme au Pheasant under Glass* (Calvados cream sauce on pheasant breast, placed on Virginia Smithfield ham, with a sprig of rosemary and covered with a glass dome).

A nationwide trend

Hautle is not alone in favoring herbs. Chefs around the country are using larger quantities of fresh herbs to satisfy the aesthetics of their diners and the tastebuds of health-conscious patrons. The herb flavors replace not only salt but also cholesterol-heavy vegetable oils in every part of a restaurant's menu.

The use of herbs in the 300 meals served daily at the Waldorf Astoria's Peacock Alley restaurant in New York City has increased 50 percent in the last two years, says executive chef John Doherty. "As fresh herbs become more available, we really find more uses for them," he says.

"When you use herbs, you have to have a balance," Doherty adds. "You have to know their strengths and what they will do." Doherty is especially fond of parsley stems. Incorporating them with other aromatic herbs gives food a "very earthy taste," he says.

Using just the right amount of herbs is key to the ultimate success of the meal, agrees French-born Francis Drillien, executive chef at the Ambassador Grill at the United Nations Plaza Hotel in New York City. He believes that too many herbs can drown the food.

Drillien's favorite herb is rosemary. One of his signature recipes is a rosemary-scented chicken dish. Drillien first precooks a chicken in a clay steam pot. He then collects the juices and mixes them with vegetables, such as carrots and turnips, and adds a sprig of rosemary. Next, the mixture is put inside the chicken, and the chicken is covered with a bread dough and baked. The dough helps keep the rosemary inside the chicken. "It is very aromatic. If you cut the dough just at the neck, the perfume comes out; and it is unbelievable," he says.

For all types of restaurants

"You find not only more and more five-star restaurants but more middle-of-the-road restaurants using herbs," notes Maureen Buehrle, former executive director of the International Herb Growers and Marketers Association in Silver Springs, Pennsylvania.

A lot of smaller herb growers have done well pioneering sales to restaurants by taking them samples and recipes. Many started selling in small quantities of $5 and $10 a week and quickly increased sales as customers complimented the chefs on their herb-flavored dishes.

Many hotel chefs are great fans of herbs. Marco Barbitta, executive chef of the Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress in Orlando, Florida, and Heinz Hautle, executive chef of the Hotel Hershey in Hershey, Pennsylvania, enjoy picking herbs from their gardens.

"I see the trend developing more and more in restaurants," notes Peter J. Goldstein, who supplies more than 100 New York City restaurants with fresh herbs and tender fresh-cut salads flown in from California. Goldstein, who started from scratch two years ago, runs two delivery trucks, putting together orders as early as 4 a.m. In a week's time he packages and delivers between 500 and 600 pounds of herbs. That translates into an annual income of $750,000.

"I think in general the uses and

LEMON AND ROSEMARY STEAMED PUDDING

Serves 8

The balance between sweet sugar and tart lemon juice is what gives this pudding its strong character. The surprising addition of rosemary does not make this pudding at all savory. The rosemary becomes diminished as a flavor and more important as an aroma.

This pudding is quite dense and hearty. Covered, it rewarms easily in the oven.

Ingredients:
13 Tbs. sweet butter
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
2½ cups dry bread crumbs
½ cup milk
1 tspn. baking powder
1 lemon, grated zest only
2 Tbs. chopped fresh rosemary
2 cups lemon custard*

Method:
Butter a pudding mold (or a 1-pound coffee can) with 1 Tbs. of the butter. Fill a 3-quart pot with water and bring to a boil over high heat.

In a mixer, cream sugar and remaining butter together on medium speed. Add the eggs and mix to incorporate. Add bread crumbs, milk, baking powder, lemon zest, and rosemary and mix until smooth. Pour the batter into a mixing bowl and fold 1 cup of the lemon custard into the batter. Do not mix well. Pretend you are making a marble cake.

Pour the batter into the prepared pudding mold or coffee can. Do not fill more than three-quarters full. Cover tightly. Place in boiling water, reduce heat to low and gently simmer for 2½ hours. Remove pudding from water and let cool for 10 minutes before unmolding. The pudding should be served warm or at room temperature with the remaining cup of lemon custard as an accompaniment.

*For 1 quart of lemon custard combine:
5 eggs
5 egg yolks
2 cups sugar
1 cup fresh lemon juice
2 lemons, grated zest only
½ cup unsalted butter

—*from* Secret Ingredients, *by Michael Roberts (Bantam Books, 1988)*

Nutritional analysis per serving: 595.2 cal., 74.3 g. carb., 31.1 g. fat, 9.3 g. protein, 509.8 mg. sodium, 254.3 mg. cholesterol

CELERY SOUP WITH LOVAGE AND RICE

Serves 6

Lovage is a tall, handsome perennial with large leaves that look like parsley or celery. In fact the leaves taste something like celery, but more wild and rich; and the whole thing looks like a somewhat disorganized celery plant.

THE STOCK
2 cups chopped leek greens and root
2 to 3 celery stalks, chopped, plus a handful of celery leaves
2 bay leaves
5 parsley branches
Salt
1½ quarts water

Wash the leek greens and celery, put all the stock ingredients into a pot, cover with water and bring to a boil. Simmer for 25 minutes and strain.

THE SOUP
2 med.-sized or 1 large leek (white part only), cut into small squares
1 small red or yellow onion, finely chopped
2 Tbs. chopped parsley
2 cups diced celery, in small, even pieces
1 Tbs. chopped lovage
2 Tbs. butter
Salt
1 cup light cream
½ cup cooked white rice
2 tspn. finely chopped lovage leaves
Freshly ground pepper

While the stock is cooking, wash and chop vegetables for the soup. Melt butter in a soup pot, add the vegetables and salt, and cook gently for 10 minutes. Add the stock, bring to a boil and simmer until celery is tender, about 25 minutes.

To give the soup a creamy background texture, puree 1 or 2 cups; then return it to the pot. Stir in the milk or cream. Season to taste with salt. Serve soup in warmed soup plates with a couple of spoonfuls of rice in each plate. Garnish with fresh lovage and pepper or stir in a spoonful of lovage butter.

—*from* The Savory Way *by Deborah Madison (Bantam Books, 1990)*

Nutritional analysis per serving: 215.1 cal., 16.2 g. carb., 2.6 g. protein, 16.4 g. fat, 54.4 mg. cholesterol, about 123.0 mg. sodium

applications of herbs will continue to grow and become more varied," Goldstein says, noting that the newest application of herbs—in desserts—is growing. For example, lavender, lemon verbena and lemon basil are just a few of the herbs used to flavor ice cream.

Promoting herbs

The importance of herbs as a palate pleaser has led some restaurants to more actively promote them as a sales tool. Take for example the Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress in Orlando, Florida, which promotes not only its "cuisine naturale" but also a colorful "chef's herbal garden," which tastefully mixes with tropical plants and a running brook that overlooks a cascading waterfall.

The garden provides more than 30 herbs, including red basil, curry and pineapple mint. "When herbs are picked right before using them, the aroma is much stronger and you don't lose the oil," observes Rene Mettler, one of the chefs for the hotel's three restaurants.

"We stay with everything light," adds executive chef Marco Barbitta. "That's the main thing we want: No flour. No butter. No 'base.' " (Diners can request the Hyatt's special menus, which specify amount of calories, cholesterol, sodium and fat levels.)

"Herbs bring out the flavor," notes Barbitta. He enjoys using rosemary for marinating meats and diced dill or sage in sauces for fish. The restaurants use about 25 pounds of fresh herbs daily. Barbitta is able to work herbs into every aspect of the menu, which has also been coordinated with guidelines set forth by the American Heart Association, the Pritikin Institute and Weight Watchers International.

No need for fanfare

The Union Canal House in Hershey, Pennsylvania, is a good example of a traditional and very popular steak and seafood restaurant that has not been afraid to venture into unfamiliar territory. Chefs Bryan Wilkinson and Ken Henderson have worked fresh herbs like basil, chives, dill, sage and peppermint into the established menu. In fact, they have enjoyed the results so much that they have started growing herbs in pots on windowsills during the winter to supplement their supply of fresh vegetables and herbs bought from an Amish farmer.

The Pavilion restaurant in the Four Seasons at Newport Beach, California, provides another example of how fresh herbs can be slipped subtly into the menu without a lot of fanfare. "We have gradually increased our use of herbs like St. Joseph's Coat, parsley, exotic lavender, lemon thyme and apple mint," says chef de cuisine Bill Bracken. Bracken favors using a variety of herbs when cooking sauces for fish, usually adding them at the end of the sauce preparation. Some herbs, such as St. Joseph's Coat—which Bracken describes as an "off-breed spinach"—add a delicate touch to plate decoration. Others, like apple mint, bring an unusual flavor to dishes, especially salads.

Bracken found a good herb supplier, the Malibu Herb Farm, about 60 miles away from his operation, and now spends as much as $1,000 a week on fresh herbs. He and other chefs expect the use of herbs to remain at about the same level for the next few years. "Herbs will always be there," he says. "I couldn't cook without them." ❑

Dennis Blank is a freelance writer in Williston, North Dakota.

Herbs for a cause

The Jesse M. Unruh Herb Garden in Long Beach, California, has made it possible for restaurateurs in Southern California to receive a steady supply of organically grown, fresh herbs and to benefit a charitable organization.

The ornamental herb garden was started in 1988 by the Betty Clooney Foundation for Persons With Brain Injury, a nonprofit rehabilitation facility that offers affordable community-based vocational and recreational services for brain-injured people. Friends of Jesse M. Unruh (former treasurer of the state of California) and other foundations donated startup funds, and the Southern California Edison Company provided the 1/3-acre plot of land for the garden.

The herbs provide a great opportunity for members of the Betty Clooney Center as well as local businesses. "Herbs are wonderful for beginning gardeners because they are more forgiving than other types of plants," notes Margo Baumgardner, business manager of the center, which is located near the garden.

Young adult members of the Betty Clooney Center who choose to be in the horticulture unit (known as "The Green Team") tend the garden. The Green Team prepares participants to go back to work in the community through a "work hardening" emphasis on punctuality, independence and reliability.

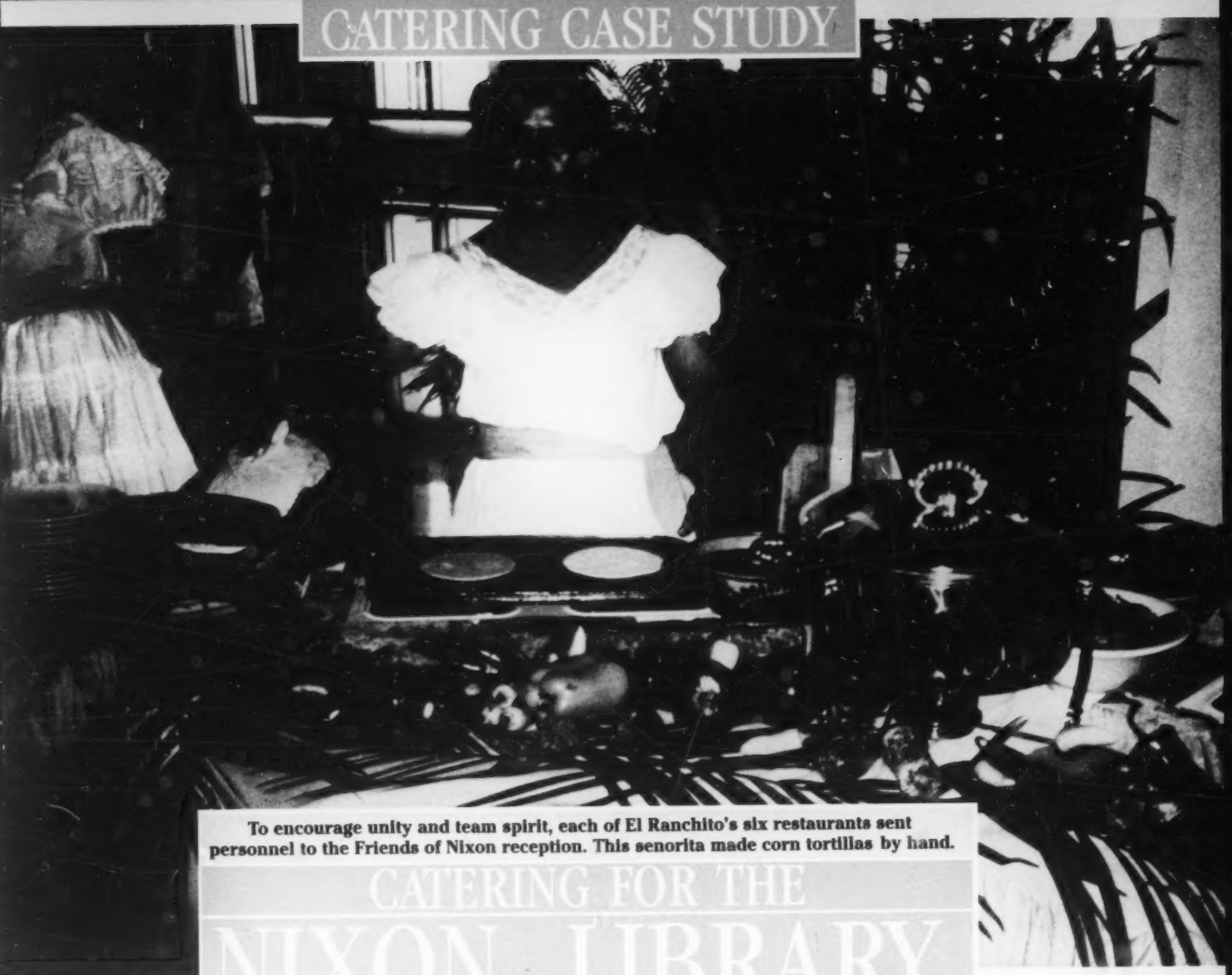
More than 50 varieties of herbs are grown in the garden, including rosemary, thyme, lemon basil, opal basil, tarragon, pineapple sage, garlic, chives, dill and edible blossoms, such as pansies, violets, violas, nasturtiums, calendula and crane's bill geraniums. The garden's products are sold to restaurants, markets and area residents through a country store, Rosemary Clooney's Herbs, which is a converted garage of approximately 200 square feet located at the center and garden site.

With the growing preference for low-fat and low-sodium meals, the demand for these products is rising, resulting in increased sales and more customers. All proceeds from the sales go to the Betty Clooney Foundation.

The worthwhile cause of the Foundation pleases the herb garden's customers. Indeed, Joe Cochran Jr., executive chef at the Riva Restaurant in Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel, buys 10 to 30 pounds—or "whatever is harvested in one week"—from the Jesse M. Unruh Herb Garden. He goes to other sources only when he needs supplements. "The Betty Clooney Foundation is a great cause to support," says Cochran, "and their herbs are organically grown and are spectacular, superior products."

Cochran uses the herbs in everything from meat, fish and poultry entrees to soup and pasta. "Take out the cream, butter, fats and salts, and the only thing left to flavor foods with naturally is herbs," he says. "Herbs give uncomplicated, clean flavors to food."

—L.H. (Zari) Malsawma



To encourage unity and team spirit, each of El Ranchito's six restaurants sent personnel to the Friends of Nixon reception. This senorita made corn tortillas by hand.

CATERING FOR THE NIXON LIBRARY AND BIRTHPLACE

by Terri Woodard-Polster

It's not often that a local ethnic restaurant caters a community event that attracts the attention of the public across the nation and the world. The opportunity to cater the celebratory events that preceded the opening of the Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace in July 1990 in Yorba Linda, California, presented a new level of catering experience for the El Ranchito Mexican Restaurant chain from Southern California.

Avila's El Ranchito Restaurant was founded 24 years ago in Los Angeles as a family-operated business, with mama cooking traditional Mexican recipes, papa managing the front of the house and all six children helping out. It has since expanded beyond the parent restaurant to include five more restaurants throughout Southern California, owned and managed by the Avila children. Most of the locations have catered off-premises parties, but Maria Elena Avila, owner and manager of the Brea restaurant, has been focusing on expanding the company's catering opportunities. The opening of the Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace was just the public relations opportunity she was looking for.

"Acapulco shrimp coctel" was just one of the savory south-of-the-border delights El Ranchito offered at the Friends of Nixon reception in July.

El Ranchito's involvement with the opening began with the recommendation of a very prominent and satisfied customer. When the planning committee met in February to begin designing the pre-opening parties, Nixon's fondness for Mexican food was considered, as was the referral. Thus, El Ranchito was included in the call for bids, which also was sent to three well-known caterers. The request for proposals outlined the objectives of six catering projects—three before the dedication, including a docent/volunteer reception for 100, a City of Yorba Linda leadership reception for 50 and a reception for the friends and former staff of Nixon for 300, plus three on the actual dedication day—a breakfast for the dignitaries, a breakfast for the press and a gala luncheon reception for 3,000.

The request for proposals contained detailed specifications for each event, including the date, hours of service, type of service requested, a suggestion of menu ideas, expected attendance and site location. The bidders were given three weeks to submit their proposals.

Designing the menus

The catering manager at El Ranchito's Brea restaurant, Ginger Perez, began preparing for the proposals by reviewing the restaurant's menus. Because all the evening parties were around the dinner hour, the search was for "finger foods" that could make up a meal. Many of the popular restaurant items were included in smaller versions, such as chimichangas, empanadas, taquitos and tamales. But it was also necessary to add a few items that were not on the restaurant menus—to add flair and to "fill-in" with appropriate standup cocktail food. New items created included salads, such as "Azteca Pasta Salad," "Ensalada de Arroz" (rice salad) and "Ensalada Tropical" (fresh seasonal fruit salad tossed in a cointreau orange raspberry marinade and served with bowls of toasted flaked coconut, chopped walnuts, dates and raisins). To make the presentation sound inviting, word descriptions were added. For example, for the "acapulco shrimp coctel" the description read: "*Just like in Acapulco!* Succulent shrimp, *fresh-squeezed* lime juice, *spicy* cilantro and ripe avacado tossed in a *tasty* Mexican 'coctel,' accompanied by *crispy* tostaditos. An elaborate tropical floral centerpiece and seashells will remind your guests of balmy Acapulco as our uniformed waitstaff serves the 'coctel' from oversized glass bowls."

The proposal also included special touches, such as a station of freshly made corn, flour and blue-corn tortilla chips; tostaditos served with an assortment of fresh salsas; guacamole and chorizo-bean dip. Beverage stations featured both alcoholic and nonalcoholic drinks. All beverages had a Mexican flair, including the coffee that was to be served with cinnamon and chocolate.

Each of the event menus included a dessert station. For the large party for 3,000 many of the dessert items were to be subcontracted from a neighboring French restaurant, La Vie en Rose. The French restaurant furnished a list of 10 finger desserts it could prepare for less than 50 cents a piece for quantities of 500 to 1,000.

As El Ranchito evaluated the appropriateness of the menus, it also considered the logistics of production—how and where these items were going to be prepared—and the logistics of party design—what size, quantity and shape of tables would be needed to serve the numbers of guests anticipated for the various events. It was determined that a great majority of the food could be prepared ahead at the restaurant and brought to the site to be reheated or to be refrigerated and then placed directly on the table. Some of the items, such as the fried foods, needed to be freshly prepared, so a "site kitchen," consisting of work tables, gas stoves and deep-fat fryers, was designed into the proposals. Also, since the fajitas were intended to be "station-cooked" or "exhibition-cooked," this necessitated table-top

The Mexican buffet at the Friends of Nixon reception in July included a colorful array of corn, blue-corn and flour tortilla chips as well as a spicy selection of salsas, guacamole and chorizo-bean dip to accompany them.

grills, placed over butane-cassette gas stoves.

In order to finish a comprehensive bid, El Ranchito managed to acquire a site plan of the entire library facility from the general contractor at the site construction trailer, since none was furnished by the planning committee. A member of the construction management staff even scheduled a walk-through of the site, explaining where future landscaping, walls and other barriers were going to be. This information allowed El Ranchito to design a tentative floor plan of where it would place the separate food stations, bars and canopies.

With the site plan already in mind, El Ranchito calculated the number and variety of banquet tables it would need as well as the appropriate linens, tabletop equipment and floral arrangements. It figured the cost of these items by using a local party-rental company's inventory checklist. El Ranchito included these additional costs in its proposals.

Once the menu was designed for each event, quantities were established. Food quantities were based on the restaurant's standard rule of thumb for dinner-hour caterings: approximately 20 ounces of food per person. Knowing the food and beverage varieties and quantities allowed El Ranchito to come up with a selling price for each menu. Because the menu was designed simultaneously with the physical design of the party layout, the service needs were evaluated for each table setup. El Ranchito also determined how many chefs and food servers were needed for each buffet station and the number of busing and supervisory help that would be needed.

Putting it down on paper

After more than 100 hours of researching, designing, meeting and pricing, a proposal for each of the six separate events was prepared. The proposals followed the same basic format, including a cover letter from the restaurant's owner, menus, equipment lists and pricing breakdowns. Where a buffet station was described, special detail was included to indicate the proposed table decor and props. When the proposals were completed, Avila attempted to personally deliver them (a sales tactic I highly recommend in competitive bid situations), but she was instructed to just "put them in the mail."

Months went by before El Ranchito heard from the public relations firm again. When it did, the restaurant was asked to meet with the planning committee. El Ranchito was delighted with the opportunity to present its proposal at its newest restaurant in Brea.

"It was important for us to create the atmosphere of the parties we proposed on paper, and we went to extra expense to make sure we created a beautiful presentation," says Avila. A small mariachi band was hired for the occasion, photographs of past buffets and catering jobs were organized into a portfolio album, samples of the suggested menus were displayed on beautifully decorated tables in one section of the restaurant and a foamcore board was developed to depict the suggested floor plans put together from information gleaned on the site tour.

All of the committee's questions were answered regarding El Ranchito's past experience and planned approach to the library opening events.

Although the local media were beginning to search for a story on the social events surrounding the library opening, El Ranchito was asked not to divulge any information. One of the other bidding caterers did, however, and was automatically dropped from consideration. This "tight-lipped" media policy remained throughout the entire planning.

When the awaited phone call was finally received, El Ranchito learned that the very large event for 3,000 and the previous two breakfasts were awarded to a very large Los Angeles caterer, Ambrosia, experienced in serving thousands. The committee did, however, give all the other

events—plus two additional ones—to El Ranchito.

In retrospect, this was great foresight, as it would have been nearly impossible, with the changes in plans that would follow, for one company to pay attention to *all* the details necessary for *all* the events. The two occasions that were added to the festivities were a simple reception for Orange County tour-group leaders the month before the opening and a very important, formal sit-down luncheon to be hosted by William Simon, former Secretary of the Treasury for the Nixon cabinet and the current chairman of the Nixon Foundation.

Beginning the preparations

A local rental company was notified immediately of the confirmations, and as soon as the library building was completed, a walk-through meeting was called with the company at the site. All the tables, linens and equipment for the party area were specified and ordered, as well as the prep tables, deep-fat fryers and stoves needed in the "kitchen area." Because the library was built without a caterer's kitchen and the employee kitchen was too small and inconvenient, the truck loading dock area was cleared and set up as a kitchen. Electric "hot boxes" for "back-up" food were rented for a holding area near the party. New employee uniforms were also purchased, and special arrangements were made with a local cleaner to launder them daily.

A very close working relationship was established between Avila and the chairwoman in charge of all the catering. There were at least 12 to 15 meetings, recalls Avila, and she was told repeatedly to "stay flexible" as the count for each party fluctuated by 50 to 100 guests. The logistics for the events also changed daily, as the building neared completion and as more influential people close to Nixon became involved in the planning. This continual "changing of the guard" was an unknown factor and was very difficult to work with. If she were in this position again, Avila says, she would "be firmer with clients and put limitations and deadlines on them."

Preparing the food for more than 1,000 guests within four days would have put too much pressure on the Brea restaurant alone. So the Santa Ana restaurant contributed by making all of the raw ingredients for the bulkier items and trucking them to the library site daily. All fried items, including the sugary *bunuelitos* (dessert chips) and the tortilla chips were cooked at the site kitchen, on an as-needed basis. All the mixtures for the chimichangas, the enchiladas and the shrimp cocktails were made ahead and sent separately, to be assembled on site.

The formal luncheon looked to be the biggest challenge for El Ranchito, and was therefore handled completely separate from the other events. The menu was custom designed, highlighting many of Mama Avila's original recipes, which she herself cooked. All the other food was prepared by a very experienced chef who was hired from a local country club. He and Mama Avila prepared a sample dinner before the event to determine exact seasonings, portions, garnishes, placement on the plate, etc. Since the style of the party dictated a more formal service style than the restaurant was accustomed to, the neighboring French restaurant was asked to provide experienced waitstaff. In addition, La Vie en Rose volunteered to order all the food to keep the ordering separate from the other parties, and it donated the use of its kitchen for the pre-operation.

Sixty employees were needed to serve the other events, and all six of the El Ranchito restaurants were summoned to send personnel—10 per unit. Ginger Perez from the Brea restaurant was the overall coordinator. One restaurant manager from each location supervised one particular area, such as the setup of buffet tables or the scheduling and assigning of staff. Perez recalls numerous organizational meetings with the managers to go over the specifics of the events. Each manager, in turn, met with the selected employees to review their responsibilities. Some temporary hard feelings did occur among employees left behind; but dispersing the labor needs throughout the entire chain brought the company more unity and team spirit, which still continues.

When it came time to set up each event, Perez prepared charts to designate time schedules and assignments for each employee. She also provided diagrams that depicted equipment and decor placement and the amounts of paper and plastic goods needed at the station.

Enjoying the success

The events went smoothly. The attendance of the entire Avila family at each event added to the "family" atmosphere El Ranchito wanted to create. A professional photographer was hired to take photos of the tables just before the parties—a practice Avila recommends so that quality photos can be added to a sales portfolio. El Ranchito had also hired its own public relations company who did a superb job publicizing the event in more than seven newspapers, including one article that ran as far away as San Francisco!

The only difficulty the staff seemed to face was in dealing with the dirty dishes, glassware and silver from some of the parties. When serviceware is used for large events, a well-planned system of busing and clean-up needs to be in place, and El Ranchito staff had no previous experience in this type of service.

Despite the frequent changes in plans, the hundreds of hours it took to prepare these events and the more than $2,500 spent on Mexican pottery, decor and uniforms, Avila considers the experience to have been a positive one—not only because of the historic significance of the event and the sense of accomplishment and pride for her family and their restaurants but also because the magnitude of these events gave the El Ranchito staffs superb off-premises catering experience that can be used to qualify them for future opportunities. There should definitely be more opportunities coming because the library designated El Ranchito on its "preferred caterers" list—a concrete expression of satisfaction. ❑

Terri Woodard-Polster is a consultant and instructor for the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation. She was hired by El Ranchito to add her expertise to the bidding process and to the event planning.

#112

Performance appraisals

Evaluating the work performance of subordinates is a key management responsibility, but it is one that is frequently avoided, rushed or handled poorly. This behavior is often the result of the manager's inability to analyze the responsibilities, duties and tasks undertaken by subordinates, coupled with the discomfort that many people feel when they face the possibility of a confrontation—particularly when they do not feel that they are on solid ground with respect to their human relations skills.

In an attempt to add to the confusion, cause further difficulty and muddle up all attempts at improvement, I have created a ready-made performance evaluation form managers can use to evaluate their employees. Workplace performance factors are listed on the left. Degree of standards adherence is calibrated on the right.

Fisher's Law #112: Performance appraisals are important. They are your employees' psychic return on your investment in them.

Performance factor	Degree of standards adherence			
	Outstanding	**Superlative**	**The Best**	**Highest**
Attendance	Has never shown up	Saw him/her once or twice	Occasionally drops by	Physically present, mentally absent
Job knowledge	Less than none	None	Enough to be dangerous	Knows it all; does nothing
Accuraccy	Always in errorr	Usualy wrong	Guesses write sometimes	Ocasionaly correctt
Quantity of work	Zero, but it's better that way	Represents what not to do	Prodigiously nonproductive	Produces a little by accident
Quality of work	100 percent defects	Inordinately shoddy	Used as a "terrible example"	Regularly discarded
Communications ability	Talks while sleeping	Yawns and rolls eyes	Gestures wildly	Grunts occasionally
Creativity	Unimaginative	Hopelessly dull	Myopic	Stubbornly rigid
Loyalty	Reports to competitors	Loyal only to self	Starts rumors	Talks to media
Courtesy	Snarls when spoken to	Constantly wears a Walkman	Morosely sinister	Yells at customers
Stability	Wobbly	Dances and prances	Talks to self	Talks to computers
Drive	Usually in reverse	Occasionally shifts into neutral	Has a dead battery	Stalls a lot
Promotability	Just our type	Has patterned self after senior management	Presidential material	Please promote to remove from my supervision

THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY RESPONDS TO THE NEEDS OF THE HOMELESS

The plight of the homeless and hungry in America has been one of the most compelling social issues of the 1980s. And although we have entered the decade of the '90s, there is little long-term relief in sight. According to Ann Hales, director of the homeless program at the School of Hotel Administration at Cornell University: "Today 1 percent of the population is homeless; and if economic, political and domestic trends continue as they have throughout the last 15 years, the number of homeless people could grow as high as 6 percent of the population within the next 15 years."

The hospitality industry responds

Many organizations throughout the hospitality industry have contributed and are continuing to contribute to addressing the problems of homelessness. Here are some examples of what the industry has done.

□ *Jessie's House commemorates restaurateur.* Jessie Benoit is the former proprietor of the Red Lion diner located in Northampton, Massachusetts. Prior to her recent retirement from the restaurant business, her establishment was a haven to many of the town's hungry and homeless. The homeless knew that at Jessie's a meal could be had without regard to one's ability to pay. In recognition of Benoit's generosity, a 20-bed shelter for the homeless was named in her honor—Jessie's House—in 1983. Since its opening, it has provided assistance to more than 2,000 people. Temporary housing and meals are provided while efforts are made to find more permanent housing. Other assistance, such as finding day care for children, is also available.

□ *Days Inn responds to needs of homeless.* Days Inn has responded to the plight of the homeless in both short-term efforts and long-term programs. In one instance, a Navy fighter jet crashed into an apartment complex near Atlanta, leaving 75 people instantly homeless. The management of the Days Inn in the area responded immediately by organizing a Red Cross relief station in the hotel lobby.

Days Inn also has contributed to more long-term solutions to the problem of homelessness by offering the homeless jobs in its properties and interim housing at $10 a day. (The homeless pay $5; Days Inn matches that amount.) In exchange, participants agree to save a percentage of their paychecks toward a down payment on housing, to not use alcohol or drugs on the premises and to not entertain more than one visitor at a time. After some initial problems in screening applicants, the program has been quite successful, with nearly 66 percent of participants staying on with the company or moving on to more responsible positions elsewhere.

□ *Best Western International works to improve shelters.* Best Western International and the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) have joined forces with the National Alliance to End Homelessness to improve the shelters used to house the homeless. Both groups contribute to interior design services, furniture, fixtures and equipment to shelters designated by the alliance.

□ *Smith College's cancelled meals help homeless.* Paul Garvey, director of dining services at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, also serves as president of the board of directors of the Western Massachusetts Food Bank (WMFB). The WMFB, like other food banks nationwide, is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to collect surplus food and distribute it to local nonprofit agencies, which, in turn, serve low-income families and individuals. In the early 1980s Garvey worked with a group of Smith College students to develop strategies for helping the hungry and homeless of western Massachusetts. The result of their efforts is the meal-cancellation program. Formally established in 1983, Smith College dining services donates 10 cents to the WMFB for every meal cancelled by a

Shooting Back

As the problem of homelessness worsens, foodservice operators are searching for ways to lend a helping hand.

by Linda K. Enghagen, J.D.

student. Students are apprised of the program early in the school year and then sign up for the meals they intend to miss. In the 1989-90 academic year, Smith College students cancelled 4,274 meals.

Feeding the homeless

Throughout the nation, there are a number of programs that provide food to the homeless. Some are large national fundraising events, such as the annual Taste of the Nation sponsored by Share Our Strength (SOS). Others are prepared-food programs that bring surplus prepared and perishable food from restaurants and caterers to agencies feeding the needy.

In Seattle, Washington, more than 60 restaurants, hotels and caterers have joined the fight against hunger by sending their overages to Seattle's Table. In its first year of operation in 1989 more than 100,000 pounds of food were transported by refrigerated van to 22 meal programs in shelters and missions throughout the city.

This fall, Seattle's Table has expanded its service to Saturdays and acquired a second refrigerated van, courtesy of the McDonald's Corporation. Program officials hope the poundage will double in 1990.

In addition, there are smaller fundraising events in which participating restaurants donate 10 percent of their gross receipts for any given day to the local food bank. Traditionally, Wednesday nights are selected for these events because they are usually slow nights for restaurants. For example, the 1989 "Piece of Pie" event in western Massachusetts generated approximately $15,000 for the local food bank. In addition, some restaurants reported that their business for the night exceeded their typical Wednesday-night profit, even after they donated 10 percent of their receipts.

Beyond social responsibility

Regardless of one's view on the nature of the social responsibilities of businesses, it is clear that businesses and the communities they operate in have an effect on one another. More and more foodservice operations are taking the initiative to provide a helping hand. ❑

Linda K. Enghagen, J.D., is an assistant professor in the Department of Hotel, Restaurant, and Travel Administration at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

A new look at metropolitan areas, part two

The elderly magnets

It is no secret that the population of the United States is getting older. According to the Bureau of the Census, the median age of the U.S. population is expected to be 33.0 in 1990—up from 30.0 in 1980—and it is forecast to rise to 36.5 by the year 2000. As people are living longer, more are entering their "golden years." As the second in a series, this article looks at metropolitan areas defined as "elderly magnets" in Metropolitan America: Beyond the Transition.*

If asked to name a state that is home to large numbers of senior citizens, most individuals would answer "Florida." And they would be correct. The "Sunshine State" contains eight out of the 10 metropolitan areas considered to be "elderly magnets" in the Population Reference Bureau's recently released publication, *Metropolitan America: Beyond the Transition*. According to the publication's author, William Frey, Sarasota (FL), West Palm Beach** (FL), Fort Myers** (FL), Naples (FL), Ocala (FL), Lakeland** (FL), Medford (OR), Melbourne** (FL) and Tucson (AZ) fit the definition of "elderly magnet" areas. That is, at least 13 percent

**The first article, published in October 1990, discussed metropolitan areas that are baby-boomer magnets.*

***Population data for these cities include population in their consolidated metropolitan statistical area (CSMA), a standard area defined by the Office of Management and Budget as "a large metropolitan complex with a population of at least 1 million." The following list includes other areas tabulated within the CSMAs for the cities cited: West Palm Beach—also includes Boca Raton and Delray Beach; Fort Myers—also includes Cape Coral; Lakeland—also includes Winter Haven; Melbourne—also includes Titusville and Palm Bay.*

Population growth in elderly magnets, 1980-1988

The six fastest-growing metropolitan areas between 1980 and 1988 were elderly magnets

Metropolitan area	Population 1988 (000)	Percent change 1980-88	Growth rank*
Naples, FL	138.5	61.1%	1
Ocala, FL	189.8	55.0	2
Ft. Pierce, FL	231.8	53.3	3
Ft. Myers, FL**	309.1	50.6	4
Melbourne, FL***	388.3	42.3	5
West Palm Beach, FL****	818.5	41.9	6
Sarasota, FL	260.6	28.9	19
Lakeland, FL*****	395.8	23.0	37
Tucson, AZ	636.0	19.7	52
Medford, OR	145.9	10.1	104

**among 283 metropolitan areas*
***includes Cape Coral, FL*
****includes Titusville and Palm Bay, FL*
*****includes Boca Raton and Delray Beach, FL*
******includes Winter Haven, FL*
Source: Population Reference Bureau, *Metropolitan America: Beyond the Transition*

Per capita eating-place sales in elderly magnets, 1987

Among the elderly magnets, Sarasota, FL, recorded the highest per capita eating-place sales

**includes Boca Raton and Delray Beach, FL*
***includes Cape Coral, FL*
****includes Winter Haven, FL*
*****includes Titusville and Palm Bay, FL*
Source: *1987 Census of Retail Trade*, Population Reference Bureau, National Restaurant Association

Eating places in elderly magnets, 1987

Among the elderly magnets, West Palm Beach, FL, had the most eating places*

Metropolitan area	Number of eating places	Number of people per eating place	Eating place sales ($000)
Fort Myers, FL**	512	604	$244,634
Fort Pierce, FL	300	773	136,319
Lakeland, FL***	445	889	192,366
Medford, OR	228	640	76,017
Melbourne, FL****	550	706	236,624
Naples, FL	241	575	113,079
Ocala, FL	219	867	99,198
Sarasota, FL	459	568	238,196
Tucson, AZ	832	764	365,751
West Palm Beach, FL*	1,255	652	644,868
Total United States	**332,611**	**732**	**$139,281,605**

**includes Boca Raton and Delray Beach, FL*
***includes Cape Coral, FL*
****includes Winter Haven, FL*
*****includes Titusville and Palm Bay, FL*
Source: *1987 Census of Retail Trade*, Population Reference Bureau, National Restaurant Association

of the population in these areas were individuals 65 and older, and the growth rate in the number of senior citizens between 1980 and 1985 was 19.5 percent or more.

Senior population grows rapidly

While much emphasis has been placed on the "baby boomers," because of their relative numbers, it is important to note that the number of people 65 years old and older has been—and is expected to continue—growing at a faster rate than the population as a whole. For example, between 1980 and 1985, it is estimated that the number of adults 65 years old or older grew by 11.7 percent. The population of the United States grew by less than half that rate over the same five-year period—5.4 percent. According to Census Bureau projections, this growth pattern is expected to continue, with the growth in the number of senior citizens outpacing general population growth for every five-year period through the year 2010 (see graph).

Among the senior population, the fastest-growing segment is likely to be adults 85 years old and older. The "oldest old" (as this group has been dubbed) is projected to grow 42 percent between 1990 and the year 2000. This figure compares with a lower 21 percent increase in adults between 75 and 84 and a 1 percent decline in the number of adults between 65 and 74. Despite the decline in the number of 65 to 74-year-olds, these seniors are projected to compose more than half of all people 65 years old and older.

This rapid growth in the senior-citizen population is particularly evident in the elderly magnets. According to the Population Reference Bureau, between 1980 and 1988 the six fastest-growing metropolitan areas were elderly magnets. Naples (FL), Ocala (FL), Fort Pierce (FL), Fort Myers–Cape Coral (FL), Melbourne (FL) and West Palm Beach–Boca Raton–Delray Beach (FL) each recorded population growth in excess of 40 percent.

Older, but not necessarily poorer

One of the more pervasive ideas about senior citizens is that they have low income. The end of employment and subsequent retirement do often translate into a drop in income.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' *1988 Consumer Expenditure Survey*, the average household income for households headed by an individual 65 years old or older was much lower than the average annual income for all households—$16,984 versus $28,540. Nonetheless, more than one out of three households headed by a senior citizen (37 percent) reported an annual income of $15,000 or more.

However, older households are generally smaller and are less likely to have to contend with such large expenditures as a mortgage and education. In 1988 the average household headed by a person 65 years old or older included 1.8 persons and spent only $5,551 per year on housing, compared with $8,079 spent by the average household. Seventy-seven percent of this group were homeowners. Education costs for households headed by a senior were $60 per year, compared with $342 for all households. Households headed by a senior did, however, spend well above the average for health care—$2,099 compared with $1,298.

A look at the per capita personal income of the "elderly magnets" in 1988 further illustrates this point. Three of the magnets ranked among the top 20 metropolitan areas in the United States in terms of per capita personal income—West Palm Beach (ranked 10 with $22,824), Sarasota (ranked 15 with $22,100) and Naples (ranked 18 with $21,595). These three plus another two—Fort Myers ($16,890) and Fort Pierce ($16,798)—had per capita personal income above the U.S. average of $16,490.

Senior spending at restaurants: a dichotomy

With an average drop in household income of more than 40 percent for households headed by an individual 65 years old or older, it is not surprising that spending on food away from home is lower than the average for all households—34 percent of the food dollar, or $872, compared to 43 percent, or $1,612, for the average U.S. household.

The oldest seniors (aged 75 and older) tend to have lower expenditures for food away from home than their younger counterparts. The *1988 Consumer Expenditure Survey* indicates that house-

holds headed by these individuals spent 29 percent of their food budget or $566 per year on food away from home, compared with 36 percent of the food budget, or $1,081, by households headed by an individual between 65 and 74. It is important to remember, however, that the youngest group of seniors (aged 65 to 74) accounts for more than half of the senior population aged 65 and over.

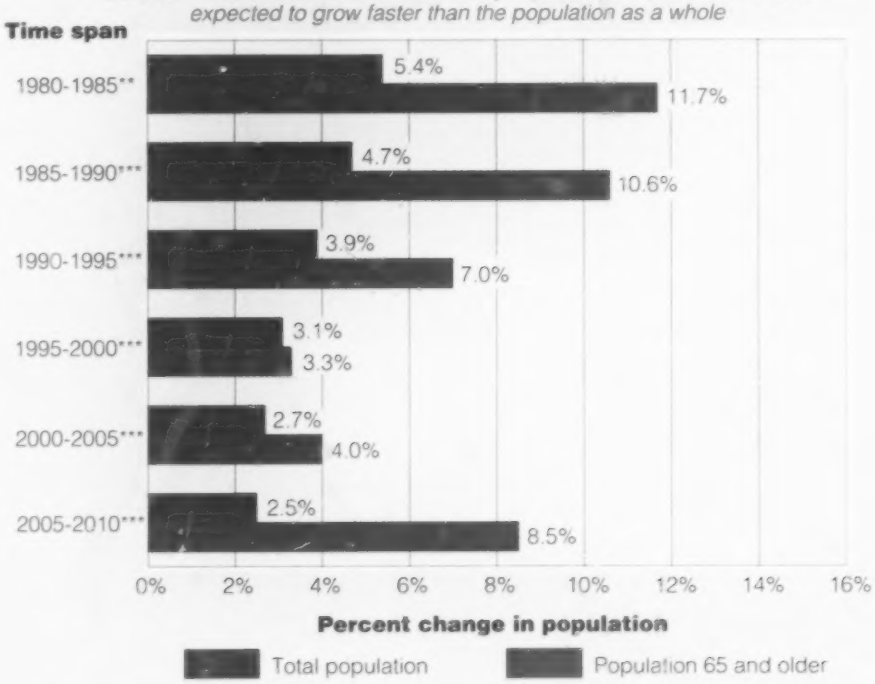
Moreover, it is worth noting that according to the *1987 Census of Retail Trade*, seniors living in the "elderly magnets" were big spenders on food away from home. Per capita eating-place sales in seven out of the 10 "elderly magnets" was higher than for the nation as a whole. The average per capita eating place sales in Sarasota (FL) was $914—the highest among all the elderly magnets. The only three metropolitan areas to record per capita eating place sales below the national average of $572 were Ocala, FL ($523); Medford, OR ($521); and Lakeland-Winter Haven, FL ($486) (see graph).

It is likely that the lower relative income of seniors in these areas may be attributable to the decreased spending on food away from home, since among the 10 "elderly magnets" Ocala, Medford and Lakeland-Winter Haven had the lowest per capita personal income.

Income is an important determining factor for spending on food away from home among seniors. Data from the *1988 Consumer Expenditure Survey* indicate that while all households headed by a senior spent 34 percent of their food budget on food away from home, those with an annual income of $20,000 or more spent more. Senior households with income between $20,000 and $29,999 allocated 38 percent of their food budget, or $1,345, to food away from home. This percentage increased to 41 percent for senior households with an annual income between $30,000 and $39,999 and 46 percent for senior households with an annual income of $40,000 or more. Even those senior households with an annual income between $15,000 and $19,999 spent roughly one-third of their food budget on food away from home.

Percent change in total U.S. population and in the number of people 65 and older, 1980-2010

Between 1980 and 2010, the number of people 65 years old and older is expected to grow faster than the population as a whole



*includes armed forces overseas
**estimated
***projected

Source: Bureau of the Census

As today's "baby boomers" become tomorrow's senior citizens, other metropolitan areas could see revenues from the increase in the senior market.

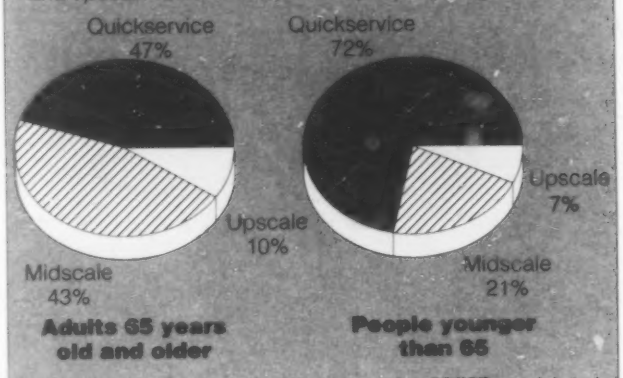
A profile of senior-citizen restaurant usage

According to a 1988 National Restaurant Association CREST special study, quickservice restaurants captured the largest share of visits by senior citizens—47 percent—but this proportion is substantially lower than for younger consumers. Quickservice restaurants accounted for 72 percent of all restaurant visits for individuals younger than 65.

Adults 65 years old and older showed a strong tendency to visit midscale restaurants. More than four out of 10 (43 percent) of all restaurant visits by seniors were to midscale restaurants. This share was much larger than for younger consumers, as midscale restaurants captured only 21 percent of restaurant traffic for individuals younger than 65. Adults 65 and older also showed a slightly higher proportion of total visits to upscale restaurants than did younger consumers—10 percent compared with 7 percent. Of these upscale

Breakdown of restaurant visits by restaurant type and age, 1988

Senior citizens had a higher proportion of visits to midscale and upscale restaurants than did people younger than 65



Source: 1988 National Restaurant Association CREST special study

restaurant visits, seniors visited more higher-check upscale restaurants—28 percent—compared with 25 percent for their younger counterparts.

In addition to being users of midscale restaurants, people 65 years old and older showed a greater tendency toward eating on premises—78 percent of visits versus 51 percent for people younger than 65. They were also more likely to eat out on a weekday—63 percent of occasions compared with 56 percent for younger consumers.

Lunch was the top meal for senior citizens at restaurants. More than four out of 10 visits (44 percent) to restaurants by senior citizens were for lunch. This compares with a lower 35 percent of visits by those younger than 65. Seniors were somewhat more inclined than younger consumers to go to a restaurant for breakfast (15 percent of visits compared with 12 percent) but had a smaller proportion of total visits to restaurants for supper (35 percent compared with 42 percent).

What are seniors eating?

The 1988 CREST special study indicates that seniors are not very different in their eating habits from their younger counterparts. For example, sandwiches were ordered on 28 percent of restaurant visits by adults 65 years old and older. This is only a slightly smaller proportion of orders than those by adults between 25 and 34 (35 percent) and adults between 35 and 44 (33 percent).

Other foods ordered on more than one in 10 restaurant visits by senior citizens included in descending order: coffee (42 percent), breakfast foods (33 percent), side salads (21 percent), desserts (16 percent), french fries and baked/mashed/stuffed potatoes (13 percent each), hamburgers and cheeseburgers (13 percent), soft drinks (13 percent), chicken (12 percent), hot vegetables (10 percent), fish and seafood (10 percent) and main-dish salads (10 percent).

—Nancy Michalski

Restaurant sales up in 1989

Total sales were higher at full-menu tableservice establishments in 1989 than in 1988, according to a special analysis of the 1990 National Restaurant Association Industry Operations Survey. *This analysis was based on respondent establishments that reported operating data for two consecutive years.*

Total sales for full-menu tableservice restaurants were up almost 5 percent in 1989, suggesting little or no real growth when menu-price inflation is taken into consideration. Total food sales advanced by more than 5 percent between 1988 and 1989, while total beverage sales increased a lower 3 percent. Occupation costs and controllable expenses increased 5 percent. Consequently, restaurant profit as a percentage of total sales remained stable at 3.5 percent.

Some of the more notable cost changes included:

□ *A jump in administrative and general expenses.* This group of expenses is commonly considered to be restaurant overhead, and it includes expenses necessary to the operation of a restaurant. Typical administrative and general expenses include commission on credit-card charges and general insurance costs as well as personnel expenses incurred as a result of hiring employees. In 1989 administrative expenses increased 9 percent at full-menu tableservice establishments—the largest advance among all the controllable expense categories. This growth in administrative expenses likely reflects the growing importance of recruiting, training and supervising employees in restaurants and could indicate increased emphasis on staff training programs.

□ *Growth in sources of "other" restaurant income.* All restaurant operating income other than that from food and beverage sales is included in this income category, such as income from a gift shop or sales of a restaurant's waste paper, plastic and bottles. In 1989 "other" income per seat advanced a healthy 10 percent at full-menu tableservice establishments. Although the median income per seat from "other" sources totaled $34, it is important to note the positive growth trend in this alternative income category. The advance reflects operator efforts to expand their income base as well as the increased emphasis on restaurant recycling and its associated revenues.

□ *An advance in payroll and benefit expenses.* Higher payroll and benefit expenses were reported at respondent full-menu tableservice restaurants in 1989, compared to 1988. Median payroll per seat was up 5 percent in 1989, while median benefit expenses per seat advanced a higher 7 percent. Median payroll per seat in 1989 reached $1,661, and median benefit expenses per seat increased to $306. These growing employee and benefit expenses may reflect operator efforts to deal with a tighter labor market in 1989 as

Operations overview of full-menu tableservice restaurants 1988 versus 1989

Total sales advanced 5 percent at full-menu tableservice restaurants

	Percent change*
Total sales	5%
Total cost of sales	4
Other income	10
Total income	7
Total controllable expenses	5
□ Payroll	5
□ Employee benefits	7
□ Direct operating expenses	8
□ Music and entertainment	−5
□ Advertising and promotion	8
□ Utilities	6
□ Administrative and general	9
□ Repairs and maintenance	2
Total occupation costs	5

**All percent change figures are based upon median dollar amounts per seat and are not intended to be representative of or to set standards for the industry. Respondents providing two years of comparable data numbered 570. Number of respondents varies by line item.*

Source: National Restaurant Association *1990 Restaurant Industry Operations Survey*

well as employers improving the benefits they offer.

□ *A small increase in repairs and maintenance expenses.* Restaurant charges that involve painting, decorating and building alterations that are not considered improvements fall into the repairs and maintenance category. Median repairs and maintenance expenditures increased just 2 percent at full-menu tableservice establishments in 1989. This small increase could reflect operator efforts to limit or postpone repair and decorating expenses as a result of other cost pressures.

□ *A decline in music and entertainment expenses.* The median expenditure per seat for music and entertainment declined 5 percent at full-menu tableservice establishments between 1988 and 1989. This decrease suggests that, as a cost-cutting measure, entertainment was limited in 1989. It also could reflect the growing consumer interest in casual dining.

□ *An increase in advertising and promotion costs.* Efforts to build customer traffic in a competitive environment have increased the importance of advertising and promotion at full-menu tableservice restaurants. Consequently, advertising and promotion expenses at these establishments advanced 8 percent between 1988 and 1989 to reach $114 per seat.

□ *An increase in occupation costs.* Occupation costs, which include rent, property taxes and property insurance, continued to advance for full-menu tableservice operators in 1989. Median total occupation costs were $389 in 1989—up almost 5 percent from 1988. The median rent expense per seat advanced 7 percent during the same period, while property insurance costs posted a decline of 4 percent.

—Hudson Riehle

Regional food preferences

A special CREST study examining consumers' regional food preferences at restaurants can help operators spot the strengths and weaknesses of particular concepts in various parts of the country. This article looks at the popularity of food items in 1989 and the changes in the number of orders from 1987 to 1989.*

Relatively speaking, in the Midwest, fried-fish sandwiches are the most popular menu item; but in the Northeast, veal is tops. In the South, biscuits are number one; and in the West, Mexican food is the favorite. When it comes to eating out, it's clear that restaurant customers across the nation vary in their food preferences. Often, the selection of food is dictated by the regional tradition and personality, the ethnic background of the population and the availability of different foods in a particular area. Here are some highlights from the CREST analysis on the relative popularity and growth patterns of various foods among the four regions.**

Northeast

□ From 1987 to 1989 frozen yogurt topped the list of the fastest-growing menu items, followed at a distance by pork, pasta, chicken sandwiches and pan pizzas.

□ Customer preferences for upscale concepts and Italian restaurants were high. It's not surprising, therefore, that in 1989 the likelihood of ordering veal and stuffed pizza was twice the national average.

□ In 1989 Mexican food still had not caught on in the region's restaurants—the likelihood of ordering Mexican dishes was about one-quarter of the national average.

□ The likelihood of ordering traditional Southern food, such as biscuits, fried chicken and iced tea was about half the national average.

□ Although the likelihood of ordering heros/subs was far above the national average, this sandwich showed signs of declining; orders dropped 9 percent between 1987 and 1989.

□ Orders for other sandwiches, such as hamburgers, roast beef sandwiches and BLT club sandwiches, declined by about 10 percent each.

Midwest

□ When compared to the rest of the country, the fa-

**CREST stands for* Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, *a diary survey conducted by one of the NPD marketing and research companies.*

***The Northeast encompasses the New England and Mid-Atlantic census regions; the Midwest contains the East North Central and West North Central regions; the South includes the South Atlantic, East South Central and West South Central regions; and the West includes the Mountain and Pacific regions.*

The five most popular menu items by region, 1989*

Rank	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
1	Veal	Fried fish sandwiches	Biscuits	Mexican
2	Stuffed pizzas	Chili	Fried vegetables	Wine
3	Variety salad sandwiches	Roast beef sandwiches	Enchiladas	Chinese/Asian
4	Heroes/subs	Heroes/subs	Fried fish	BBQ chicken
5	Nonfried fish sandwiches	Pan pizzas	Fried chicken	Eggs/omelets

** Relative to national average. Products noted demonstrate a much higher incidence of usage in the region than is seen nationally.*
Source: NPD/CREST

The five least popular menu items by region, 1989*

Rank	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
1	Mexican	Enchiladas	French toast	Steak sandwiches
2	Iced tea	Iced tea	Stuffed pizzas	Spicy chicken
3	Taco salad	Nonfried seafood	Omelets	Breakfast sandwiches
4	Biscuits	Rice	Wine	Fried fish
5	Fried chicken	Spicy fried chicken	Croissants	Coleslaw

** Relative to national average. Products noted have a much lower incidence of usage in the region than is seen nationally.*
Source: NPD/CREST

vorite menu items in the Midwest were distinctly fast food oriented. In 1989 fried-fish sandwiches, roast beef sandwiches and heros/subs were some of the most popular menu items in that region.

□ Between 1987 and 1989, frozen yogurt, pan pizzas, heros/subs and pasta each posted substantial gains in the number of orders—more than 40 percent each.

□ The likelihood of ordering items such as enchiladas, iced tea and nonfried seafood was about half the national average.

□ Orders for regular coffee, eggs and ice cream took a dive, decreasing by at least 15 percent each.

□ Midwesterners ordered less steak than they had in the past; orders dropped 12 percent between 1987 and 1989.

South

□ Traditional Southern foods, such as fried chicken and fried fish, were popular in 1989. Also popular were side dishes typically served with these fried entrees, such as biscuits and fried vegetables.

□ Similarly, items that definitely would not be served with fried entrees or side dishes, such as french toast, stuffed pizzas and omelets, were low on the popularity list. The likelihood of ordering each food item was about half the national average.

□ Pan pizzas were a big gainer in the South—orders increased by 76 percent be-

The five fastest-growing menu items by region, 1987 to 1989*

Rank	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
1	Frozen yogurt	Frozen yogurt	Frozen yogurt	Spicy chicken
2	Pork	Pan pizzas	Pan pizzas	Pork
3	Pasta	Heroes/subs	Pork	Frozen yogurt
4	Chicken sandwiches	Pasta	Pasta	BBQ chicken
5	Pan pizzas	Baked/broiled/grilled chicken	Baked/broiled/grilled chicken	French toast

** based on percent change in number of orders*
Source: NPD/CREST

The five fastest-declining menu items by region, 1987 to 1989*

Rank	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
1	Eggs/omelets	Regular coffee	Regular coffee	Veal
2	Hamburgers	Eggs	Wine	Taco salad
3	Roast beef sandwiches	Ice cream	Ice cream	Ice cream
4	BLT club sandwiches	Wine	Hamburgers	Cocktails
5	Heroes/subs	Steak	Steak	Thick-crust pizzas

** based on percent change in number of orders*
Source: NPD/CREST

tween 1987 and 1989. Orders for pork increased 73 percent.

□ The likelihood of ordering wine was about half the national average and showed no signs of improving; orders for wine decreased 14 percent between 1987 and 1989.

□ Orders for hamburgers and steak also decreased—each by 11 percent.

West

□ With the region's proximity to the Mexican border, it's not surprising that Mexican food fared best in the West. The likelihood of ordering Mexican dishes was twice the national average.

□ The likelihood of ordering Chinese/Asian food was also greater in this region than in any other.

□ Wine was popular in 1989—an appreciation enhanced, no doubt, by the existence of many local wineries. Cocktails, however, decreased in orders by 20 percent between 1987 to 1989.

□ Orders for veal decreased 31 percent, and ice cream orders dropped by 22 percent.

□ The likelihood of customers ordering BBQ chicken was higher than in any other region and still growing; orders rose by 61 percent between 1987 and 1989.

□ This was the only region where frozen yogurt was not the fastest-growing menu item: It took third place to spicy chicken and pork.

□ Although the likelihood of ordering spicy chicken in 1989 was half the national average, it was the fastest-growing menu item. Orders increased by 69 percent from 1987 to 1989.

—Elizabeth Gordon

Understanding the Hispanic market

Although often overlooked, Hispanics are becoming an important part of the American marketplace. As of March 1989, there were more than 20 million Hispanics in the United States, and they accounted for nearly one in 10 citizens. When it comes to dining out, quickservice establishments, off-premises consumption and eating with children are tops with this market.

According to the Bureau of the Census, the Hispanic* population totaled 20.1 million in March 1989. Since 1980, this segment grew five times faster than the nonHispanic population. In March 1989, the Hispanic civilian noninstitutional population was up 39 percent over 1980 census figures. This compares to a much lower 8 percent increase for non-Hispanic civilians during the same period. On the basis of the March 1989 estimate, Hispanics now constitute 8.2 percent of the U.S. population—up from 6.5 percent in 1980. By 2000, the Bureau of the Census predicts that the Hispanic population could be as high as 30 million.

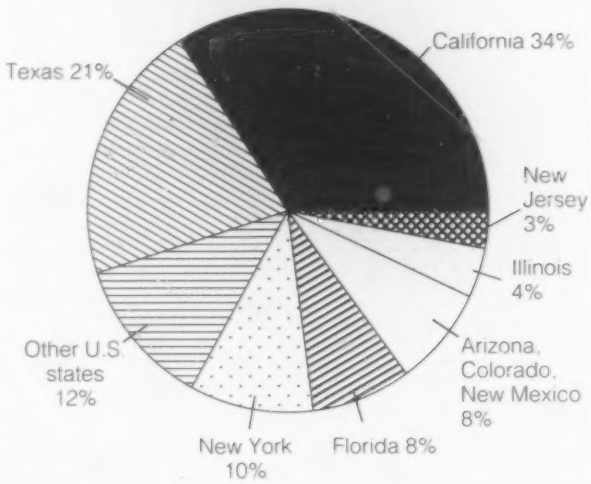
Immigration to the United States is an important part of Hispanic population growth and is responsible for about half of the group's growth. For non-Hispanics, immigration accounted for a much lower 21 percent of growth.

It is important to note that the Hispanic population is culturally diverse. In March 1989, the U.S. Hispanic population included 12.6 million Mexicans, 2.3 million Puerto Ricans, 1.1 million Cubans, 2.5 million Central and South Americans, and 1.6 million persons from other Hispanic origins.

**Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.*

Geographic distribution of the Hispanic population: March 1989

In 1989 the vast majority of Hispanics lived in nine U.S. states



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Most Hispanics live in nine states

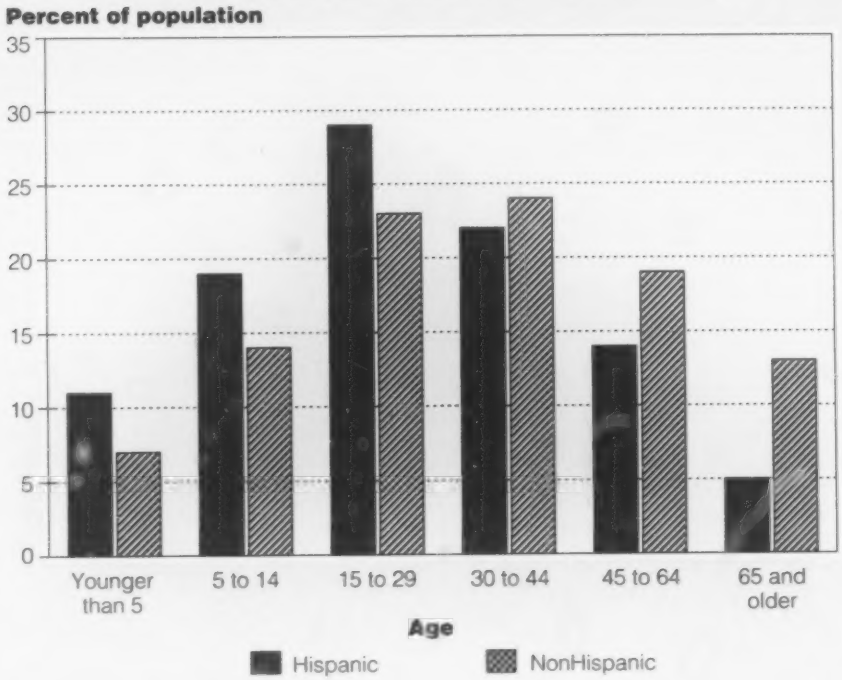
In March 1989, 89 percent of Hispanics in the United States lived in nine states (see accompanying chart). Three states alone—California, Texas and New York—were home to 65 percent of the Hispanic population.

Other states where sizable numbers of Hispanics reside included Florida (8 percent of the Hispanic population), Illinois and Arizona (4 percent each), New Jersey and New Mexico (3 percent each) and Colorado (2 percent).

Census data reveal that Hispanic households were more likely than non-Hispanic households to be located in urban areas. In March 1989, 92 percent of Hispanic households were in urban areas, compared with 73 percent of nonHispanic households. According to the Population Reference Bureau, Inc., Hispanics are concentrated primarily in Southwestern metropolitan areas and in large immigrant ports of entry. In 1985, the two metropolitan areas with the largest numbers of Hispanics were Los Angeles (with 3.6 million) and New York (with 2 million). Miami, San

Age of population: March 1989

In 1989, 30 percent of the Hispanic population was younger than 15, compared with 21 percent of nonHispanics



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Francisco, Chicago, Houston and San Antonio followed—all with more than 500,000 Hispanics each.

However, the three major Hispanic groups—Mexicans, Cubans and Puerto Ricans—resided in different areas of the country. In 1985, the majority of Mexican Americans lived in metropolitan areas of the Southwest, Cubans in Miami and Puerto Ricans in the New York area.

Hispanic demographics differ

In order to effectively market to Hispanics, operators need to have a clear understanding of how Hispanics differ from the overall population.

□ *Age.* In 1989 the median age of the Hispanic population was 26—seven years lower than the median age of the nonHispanic population. The median age for Hispanics varied substantially among the Hispanic subgroups. For example, the median age of the Cuban population was 41 years—or about 8 years older than that of nonHispanics. By comparison, the median age of the Mexican and Puerto Rican populations was younger—24 years and 27 years, respectively.

□ *Family composition.* In March 1989, about 50 percent of Hispanic families had four or more members, compared with 34 percent of nonHispanic families. Among the subgroups, Mexican families had the highest proportion of large families (55 percent had four or more members). About one in six Mexican families had six or more members. Only 34 percent of Cubans had four or more family members.

Moreover, Census Bureau data show that in 1988 Hispanic families had more children under age 18 than their nonHispanic counterparts—65 percent of Hispanic families included children, compared to 48 percent of white families and 58 percent of black families. Only 9 percent of white families included three or more children under 18—half that of Hispanic families—and 15 percent of black families. Furthermore, 35 percent of Hispanic families included youngsters under six, compared to 22 percent of white families and 26 percent of black families.

□ *Income and employment.* The income of Hispanic families in 1988 was, on average, less than that of nonHispanic families. For example, the median income of Hispanic families was $21,800, compared with $33,100 for nonHispanic families. Furthermore, the income distribution for Hispanic and nonHispanic families showed that about 20 percent of Hispanic families had incomes of less than $10,000 in 1988, compared with about 10 percent of nonHispanic families.

In 1989, Hispanic men were most likely to be employed in laborer occupations, while Hispanic women were likely to be employed in technical, sales and administrative support jobs.

In general, Hispanic civilians 15 years old and older earned less than those not of Hispanic origin. For example, the median earnings of Hispanic men was $13,600—more than $7,000 lower than that of nonHispanic men ($21,300). The median earnings of Hispanic women was also lower than those of their nonHispanic counterparts ($9,200 versus $11,200, respectively).

Earnings varied by Hispanic subgroup. Among Hispanic men, Cubans represented the highest proportion of earnings—36 percent earned $25,000 or more in 1988. Only 18 percent of Mexicans earned that amount. The proportion of Mexican women who earned $25,000 or more (8 percent) was also smaller than that for Puerto Rican, Cuban and other Hispanic women—about 15 percent each.

In addition, unemployment rates were higher for Hispanics than for nonHispanics. In March 1989, 7.8 percent of Hispanics 16 years old and older were unemployed versus 4.9 for nonHispanics. Among the subgroups, Puerto Rican males had the highest unemployment rate (12.1 percent).

Upscale Hispanics are often an overlooked market. Although the average Hispanic household income is low because recent immi-

grants usually receive low wages, affluent Hispanics are a growing part of the American marketplace. According to *American Demographics*,** the number of Hispanic households that were affluent—that had an income of $50,000 or more (in 1988 dollars)—grew from 191,000 in 1972 to 638,000 in 1988—a 234 percent increase. Most of this increase occurred during the 1980s. According to *American Demographics*, more than 2.6 million Hispanics lived in these households.

□ *Education*. Although Hispanics are making progress in terms of educational attainment, they lag behind nonHispanics. Sixty percent of young Hispanic adults (25 to 34 years old) reported they had completed four years of high school or more, compared to a much higher 89 percent of their nonHispanic counterparts. (Only half of young adult Mexicans had completed 4 years of high school or more.) About 11 percent of young Hispanic adults reported that they completed four years of college or more, compared to 26 percent of nonHispanic adults.

**the August 1990 edition

The Hispanic population by type of origin
(in thousands)

The Hispanic population grew from 15.4 million in March 1982 to 20.1 million in March 1989

	March 1989		March 1982	
Origin	**Estimate**	**Percent**	**Estimate**	**Percent**
Total Hispanic population	*20,076*	*100.0*	*15,364*	*100.0*
□ Mexican	12,565	62.6	9,642	62.8
□ Puerto Rican	2,330	11.6	2,051	13.3
□ Cuban	1,069	5.3	950	6.2
□ Central and South American	2,544	12.7	1,523	9.9
Other Hispanic	1,567	7.8	1,198	7.8
Hispanic population, as a percent of total population	**	8.2	**	6.8

** *not applicable*
Note: *Data are for the civilian noninstitutional population of the United States*
Source: Bureau of the Census

Hispanic dining-out behavior

In 1987 nearly 37 percent of Hispanic-American adults ate a meal out on any given day, reports the Gallup Organization. By comparison, nonHispanic whites ate out slightly more often (40 percent) than Hispanics, while nonHispanic blacks dined out slightly less often (33 percent). The incidence of eating out was most prevalent among the following segments of the Hispanic-American population:

□ 18 to 24-year-olds
□ college graduates
□ those Hispanics with an annual household income of $30,000 and more
□ women employed outside the home and
□ residents of the Midwest.

According to a CREST* special study, when Hispanics ate out between June 1989 to May 1990, 75 percent of their restaurant traffic went to quickservice restaurants, compared to 66 percent for nonHispanic traffic. Hispanics gave a relatively large portion of their visits to hamburger, chicken, pizza and Mexican restaurants; and they tended to order basic foods—many of which appeal to children, such as regular burgers, fried chicken, tacos and burritos. CREST suggests that to appeal to the Hispanic market, restaurants must emphasize value and families.

One-third of the restaurant visits made by Hispanics from June 1989 to May 1990 included children, compared to less than 20 percent of restaurant visits made by nonHispanics. Moreover, visits reported by Hispanics had a slightly larger average party size—2.1 for Hispanics versus 1.8 for nonHispanics.

During that period, Hispanic customers had an average per person check of $3.60, compared to $4.09 for nonHispanics. Although Hispanics spent less per individual eater at restaurants than nonHispanics did, they spent more per party because they were more likely than other consumers to include children.

Since more family parties were involved, deals played a larger role in Hispanics' dining-out behavior than they did for nonHispanics. The presence of children was reflected as well in Hispanics' above average propensity for using takeout and delivery, eating off-premises meals at home and purchasing restaurant meals on weekends.

**CREST stands for* Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, *a diary survey conducted by one of the NPD marketing and research companies.*

Spanish language dominates

Most Hispanics do not use English as their primary language. According to Telemundo's 1988 Hispanic market study, 86 percent cited Spanish as the language used most often in the home. Nearly half (46 percent) said that they still primarily use Spanish at work or school.

Forty-seven percent of Hispanic adults said they were dependent on the Spanish language. Another 22 percent classified themselves as bilingual, but still said they were very Spanish-language dependent. Twenty-six percent classified themselves as competent bilinguists, and only 5 percent said they were dependent on English.

Consistent with the strength of the Spanish language is the percentage of time spent with Spanish broadcast media. Hispanics spent 45 percent of their daily broadcast time with Spanish television, 26 percent of their time with Spanish radio, 15 percent with English television and 14 percent with English radio. Moreover, 76 percent of Hispanics surveyed agreed with the statement, "If an advertiser advertises in Spanish, I know he really wants my business."

—*Elizabeth Gordon*

Market Measure–August 1990

Because of an error made by the Gallup Organization, the Foodservice Market Measure inquiries were omitted from Gallup's August 1990 consumer omnibus. Consequently, there is no Market Measure this month. ***Restaurants USA*** will resume publication with September 1990 data.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Michael E. Hurst, owner
15th Street Fisheries, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Public Affairs Conference yields results

The Public Affairs Conference, which was held in Washington DC in September, helped us make our voices heard on crucial legislative issues. Restaurateurs met with their congressional representatives in 388 separate interviews. And it appears that our members of Congress were listening. One tangible result was 36 new cosponsors for the FICA repeal bill—27 in the House and nine in the Senate.

Association makes PAC contributions

During the fall meeting of the association's board of directors, the Political Action Committee (PAC) met and approved $170,000 in contributions to 60 candidates. Thus far, we have contributed $548,216 to political candidates during the 1989-90 election cycle.

Plans underway for Senate luncheon

The Senate Luncheon Task Force met for the first time during the board meeting and discussed the luncheon to be held April 16, 1991, for senators and their spouses. The event will be hosted by our association and will feature an all-American menu prepared by the U.S. Senate Restaurant and members of the 1992 Culinary Team USA, formerly known as the U.S. Culinary "Olympic" Team.

Civil Rights Bill vetoed by President Bush

Although both the House and the Senate passed the Civil Rights Act of 1990, President Bush vetoed the bill on October 22. Two days later the Senate fell one vote short of the two-thirds majority needed to override the veto.

Budget concerns

As this issue of ***Restaurants USA*** went to press, a congressional budget agreement had not been reached. Actions taken by Congress thus far contain adjustments that will affect our industry both positively and negatively.

Increase in child-labor laws

The House approved a provision that will significantly increase civil penalties for employers who violate teen-labor laws. The association is lobbying against this provision as House–Senate conference committee members attempt to reach a final budget.

Key deductions may not be renewed

Renewal of the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC) and of the 25 percent health-insurance tax deduction for the self-employed was not included in the budget. As a primary user of TJTC, our industry has created jobs for thousands of low-income youths, workers who are disabled and other disadvantaged groups. This action may not have been feasible without the credit. Therefore, our association is lobbying for renewal of both TJTC and the health-insurance tax deduction. We are also asking for clarification on what happens to TJTC during its expiration period.

Budget includes alcohol excise tax increases

The federal budget also contains increases in the alcohol tax, which would raise $10 billion over a five-year period. Because these tax increases do not take into account increases in state excise taxes, our association continues to lobby for fairer legislation.

Business-meal tax deduction remains

On a more positive note, there was no mention in the budget of business-meal tax deduction cuts. Our industry continues to support the position that business-meal expenses are a legitimate cost of doing business and thus the deduction should remain. Both small and large businesses have discovered that conducting business during mealtimes is not only convenient but also successful.

Environmental Executive Study Group formed

The Multi-Unit Environmental Affairs Officers Executive Study Group met for the first time on October 22 and 23 in Washington DC. Representatives of about 20 multi-unit chains were present at the meeting to discuss the direction our industry will take on environmental concerns. The group will meet twice a year. Look for locations and dates of future meetings on the "association meetings" page of ***Restaurants USA.*** If you would like more information about this study group, contact Rosemary Curtis at the association's Chicago office for details. She can be reached at 1-312-853-2525.

Monterey Wine Festival to be held March 17–19, 1991

More than 200 wineries from the state of California will pour 900 wines at the annual Monterey Wine Festival, to be held March 17–19, 1991, at the Monterey Conference Center in Monterey, California.

The wine producers themselves will be on hand during the nightly wine tastings to provide information about their wines. Champagne and dessert wines will be sampled on Sunday, white wines will be featured on Monday and red wines will be served on Tuesday. Attendees will learn valuable guidelines about pairing wines with food.

Please return completed questionnaires

The National Restaurant Association's research department has sent questionnaires to members about the wages and benefits paid to salaried employees. Please complete this survey and return it in the envelope provided. Your cooperation will ensure a comprehensive and meaningful result.

The right time to promote your business

With today's uncertain economy, operators may want some fresh ideas to keep their establishments competitive. Tough times are the right times to promote your business. On the back of this month's ***Restaurants USA,*** there is information about *PRO-MOTION*, an association newsletter filled with promotional and advertising ideas. The bimonthly publication tells you how to get the word out about your establishment at very little cost. It's an investment worth making.

SERVSAFE course available

There has been much press coverage lately about the public's concern about sanitation and foodborne diseases. The best way to reassure the public is to be sure your employees are well trained in food safety and sanitation. The Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association offers a SERVSAFE employee manual and a four-part video training series, which are designed to train and encourage employees to follow safe food-handling practices. For more information about these and other SERVSAFE products, contact the educational foundation at 1-800-765-2122.

In September 111 new members joined the National Restaurant Association. We also gained Indiana as a dual-membership state, bringing the total of dual-membership states to 20. We welcome you and assure you that your active participation in the association will strengthen your operation as well as the industry as a whole.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Hurst

Michael E. Hurst
President and Chairman of the Board

Canned coffee on the rocks

When Eli Feder of Brooklyn announced that he wanted to create and sell canned iced coffee, no one would listen to him seriously. But to the 34-year-old entrepreneur it just made sense: Canned iced tea was so popular, why not iced coffee?

After two years of fighting the disinterested and the disbelieving, Feder has finally triumphed. His canned coffee has reached the stores, where it sells for 69 cents to $1.29 per can. So far, sales look good—so good that Feder projects first-year totals for his company, P'nosh Beverages, to reach $18 to $24 million.

And those snickering disbelievers are listening more closely. Rumor has it that the Coca-Cola Co. is considering the development of an iced coffee. Cold coffee, which began as such a joke to so many, may just become the next "hot" beverage market.

—*Entrepreneur*

"Now playing ..."

Marketing food in America is becoming quite a theatrical production, as more and more manufacturers stretch creative food presentation to new limits in their search for "entertaining" foods that don't merely sit on the plate but get up and perform.

RJR Nabisco Inc. was recently awarded a patent on its latest "active" treat—a "volcanic" cookie that erupts in a sugary explosion when heated in the microwave.

As millions of dollars are spent to study chemical reactions in foods and developments in biotechnology, foods that curl, crisp, glow, grow and change color could be just around the corner.

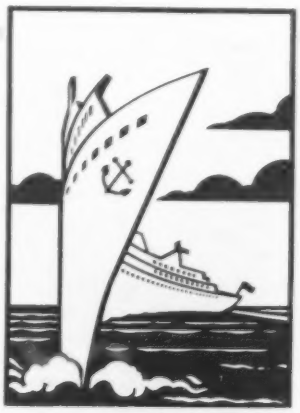
Rice Krispies, after all, didn't grab breakfast eaters with taste alone—it was "Snap, Crackle, Pop!" that perked up their ears as well as their taste buds.

—*Los Angeles Times*

Sail away to slender

A sun-drenched vacation no longer means saying "bon voyage" to fitness and good nutrition.

Although cruise lines are famous for their sumptuous cuisine and often present passengers with not three but five or six meals per day—from breakfast to brunch to midnight supper—Norwegian Cruise Line has launched a lean-menu plan aboard its newly refurbished ship, the *S. S. Norway*, as part of the Roman Spa, a comprehensive spa facility that includes hydrotherapy baths, herbal treatments and fitness programs, as well as low-calorie cuisine.



"Spa meals" are offered three times a day and are available to all passengers. Developed by a nutritionist and prepared by the spa's specially trained chef, the meals are low cholesterol and low fat and use only fresh ingredients.

—Norwegian Cruise Line

A "memorial" experience

Most diners who bite into a submarine sandwich rarely think about its seagoing namesake, much less about the valiant crews who made those vessels such a strong wartime force. Seawest Sub Shops, however, want to make their customers think and remember.

The sandwich chain, headquartered in Bellevue, Washington, is launching a campaign to focus attention on the more than 3,500 officers and crew members who perished in the 52 submarines lost in World War II. The campaign, which began in August, involves each location putting up either a plaque or poster dedicated to those heroic men.

The chain's management is working closely with the Washington state chapter of the U.S. Submarine Veterans of World War II on this venture and hopes to spread the word to other state chapters in the near future.

—Seawest Sub Shops

Service with a smile—and a clear-cut price

Every restaurant may have its own approach to service, but American Express recently discovered that there are some elements that matter more to Americans than others.

A telephone survey among card holders revealed that diners rated a greeting at the door as the most important service feature. A complimentary cocktail placed second. More than half of those surveyed (55 percent) wanted to know their server's name—a figure that rose to 72 percent in the West (but dropped to 43 percent in the South).

Such pleasant pampering and personal touches, however, do not allow practical matters to slide. Seventy-nine percent of those surveyed wanted to know the price of daily specials before ordering. Sixty-three percent wanted to *read* those special prices rather than receive a personal recitation from their server.

When it came to tipping, however, most customers took a more relaxed attitude. Two-thirds of respondents reported that they calculate the tip on the basis of the total bill, including tax.

—*New York Times*

PRO-MOTION newsletter is full of ideas that build customer traffic and profits.

To subscribe, or for more information, call the National Restaurant Association at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5900.

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1991 FORECAST

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION VOL. 10 □ NO. 11 □ DECEMBER 1990

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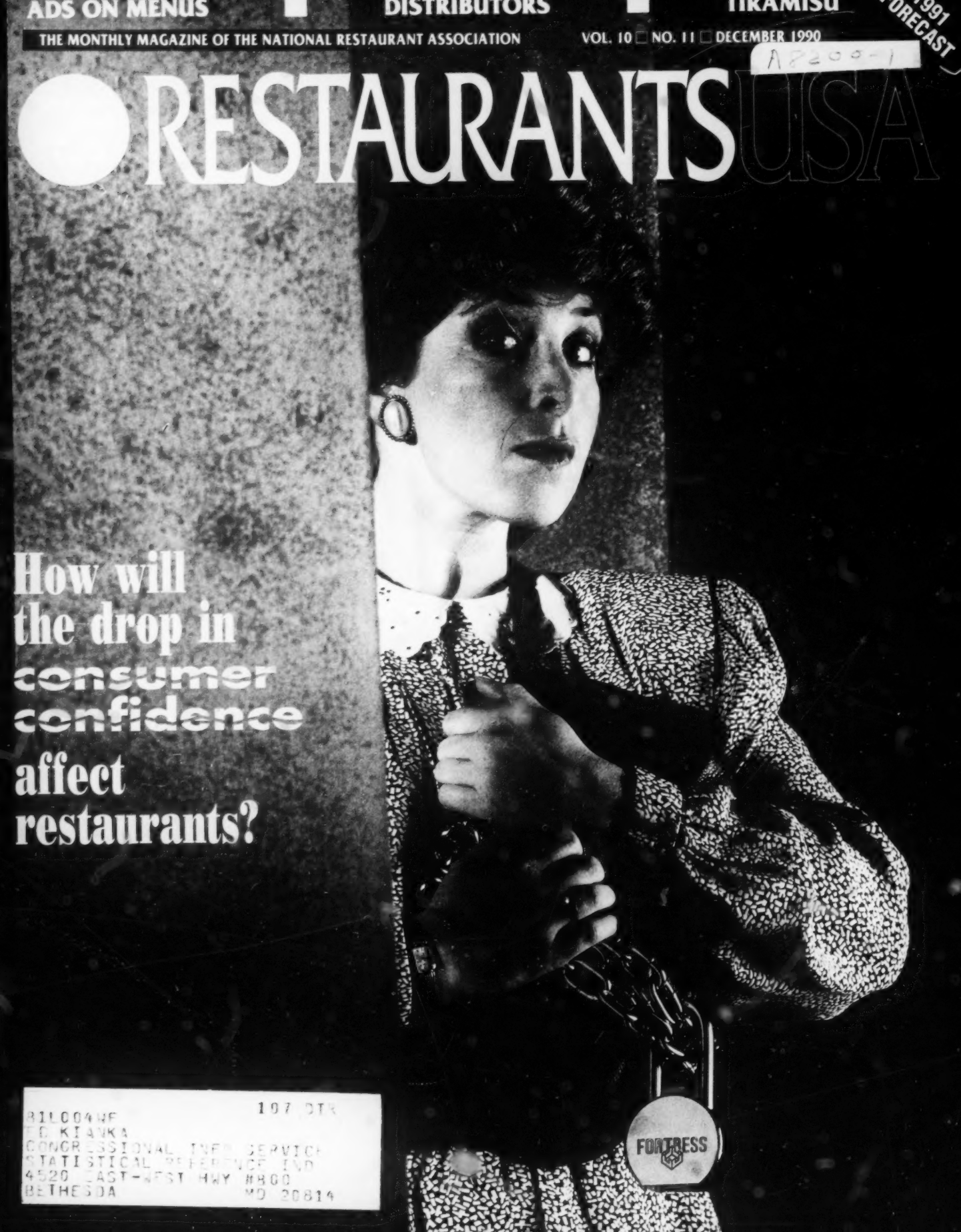
RESTAURANTS USA



How will the drop in consumer confidence affect restaurants?

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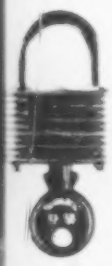
the unemployment rate in September 1990 for the construction industry reached 9.3 percent—up from 8.0 percent a year earlier. For the manufacturing industry, the unemployment rate in September 1990 advanced to 5.4 percent—up from 5.0 percent in 1989.

When real-income growth slows, consumer spending on food away from home can be hurt in the short run, and real disposable income posted a modest gain of 1.2 percent in 1990, compared to a higher 2.4 percent in 1989. Reflecting the climate of economic uncertainty in 1990, consumers increased their savings rate to 4.9 percent of personal disposable income—the highest level since 1984.



Also, when consumers buy large capital goods such as automobiles and homes on credit, these new fixed charges against their household income limit the amount of cash they have on hand. Consumer-installment debt reached record levels in 1990—exceeding $729 billion; and real consumer expenditures for durable goods advanced 0.9 percent. In addition, consumers turned to their revolving charge accounts more than ever, with the amount of debt on these lines of credit reaching a record high in 1990. Consequently, consumers had less cash on hand in 1990, and foodservice is primarily a cash-dependent business.

Economic sluggishness to continue in 1991

The nation's economy is expected to expand in 1991 but at a slightly slower pace, according to *Blue Chip Economic Indicators* (October 1990). This consensus forecast for key economic variables by more than 50 top economists predicts that real GNP gains will be somewhat lower in 1991 than in 1990—up 0.8 percent, compared to the 1.0 percent advance for 1990.

Real GNP is expected to decline for two consecutive quarters—down 0.6 percent in the fourth quarter of 1990, followed by a 0.1 percent contraction in the first quarter of 1991. Two quarters of back-to-back declines in real GNP is the accepted definition of a recession, which last occurred in 1982. *Blue Chip Economic Indicators* forecasts a return to real growth in the second quarter of 1991, with real GNP up 1.2 percent. Third-quarter real GNP is projected to rise 2.3 percent, and fourth-quarter real GNP should be up by 2.6 percent. Despite the decline in real GNP in late 1990 and early 1991, the nation's economy is forecast to continue its expansion by mid-1991. This is a positive sign because an expanding economy—even a modest growing one—correlates with expansion for the restaurant industry.

Changes in real disposable personal income are closely related to changes in restaurant sales. Real disposable personal income is forecast to edge upward 0.8 percent in 1991. With real-income growth slowing, unemployment creeping upward and consumers paying more taxes for gasoline and alcoholic beverages in 1991, it is expected that consumers will rein in their purchases for large durable items such as automobiles. This will act to boost eating-place expenditures by a small fraction when compared to 1990. In addition, consumers are expected to lower their savings rate to 4.6 percent of disposable income in 1991.

The inflation rate is expected to decline somewhat in 1991. The Consumer Price Index (CPI—all items) is forecast to advance 5.1 percent in 1991. The nation's annual civilian unemployment rate is expected to jump to 6.1 percent—its highest level since 1987. Despite a rising unemployment rate, total civilian employment should still grow marginally—up by 0.2 percent in 1991, reflecting a larger labor force overall. Consequently, consumer spending in real terms is forecast to advance 1.7 percent in 1991.

Lower interest rates are expected in 1991. The annual average prime rate is forecast to be 9.5 percent, down from 9.9 percent in 1990 and a higher 10.9 percent in 1989. In addition, continued growth in exports should stimulate the nation's economy.

More than two out of five tableservice operators expect their financing to be more difficult in 1991

	Sales volume		
	Less than $500,000	$500,000 to $999,999	$1 million and more
Percent of operators expecting financing to be:			
Harder	41%	46%	43%
Same	22	21	22
Easier	10	8	9
Don't know	27	24	26

Source: National Restaurant Association, *1990 Tableservice Operator Survey*

Restaurant financing grows more difficult

Even before the Middle East crisis in August 1990 jolted the nation's economy, domestic economic growth had slowed. Consequently, many financial institutions tightened their lending practices and standards, making it more difficult for all businesses, including restaurants, to obtain funds for development and expansion.

The banker perspective

A Federal Reserve Board survey of bank lending practices, conducted in 1990, confirmed that bankers had tightened credit standards for business. Three out of four respondent banks indicated they had tightened loan standards for development and construction. For small businesses with annual sales of less than $50 million, the study revealed that 40 percent of banks had increased collateralization requirements and tightened loan covenants. In addition, banks also increased the cost of credit lines and decreased their maximum size. For restaurateurs looking for funds to expand or improve their operations, this meant that not only were funds harder to obtain, but those funds that were available were also likely to be more expensive.

The restaurateur perspective

The association's 1990 Tableservice Operator Survey confirms that many restaurant operators found business loans more difficult to obtain in 1990 than in 1989. One out of three tableservice operators with annual sales of $1 million or more indicated that business loans were harder to obtain in 1990. When these individuals were asked to indicate what effect this difficulty had on their business, 25 percent reported it had slowed their construction and expansion plans.

When tableservice operators were asked to comment on obtaining financing in 1991, more than two out of five operators predicted it would be harder to obtain financing. Just one out of 10 predicted lending conditions would ease in 1991.

A word of caution is necessary, however. Tensions in the Middle East continue to cause volatility in domestic and international financial and energy markets. Any significant escalation of hostilities in this region could affect not only the economy of the United States but also the global economy, thereby altering consumer spending patterns.

EATING-PLACE HIGHLIGHTS

Eating places, which account for nearly two-thirds of total foodservice sales, posted a 5.2 percent sales gain in 1990, with sales reaching $154.3 billion. The forecast for 1991 indicates that sales in this segment should reach $162.6 billion, a 5.4 percent increase over 1990. Adjusted for inflation, eating-place sales will grow 0.8 percent in 1991.

The economic factors that dampened sales growth in 1990 will probably continue to influence eating-place sales in 1991: a drop in consumer confidence and a sluggish growth in real disposable personal income. Although the rate of unit expansion may slow in 1991, competition will remain intense.

Fast food (limited-menu restaurant) sales are expected to climb 6.2 percent in 1991 to reach $74.1 billion. Real sales are forecast to increase 1.6 percent.

Fast food is likely to represent the largest component of eating-place sales growth in 1991 and in the foreseeable future. Although the rate of growth will be at less than historic levels, fast food is still a fiercely competitive business.

Despite a slowdown in the rate of unit expansion in the United States, major fast food chains are aggressively pursuing expansion abroad.

The fundamental forces behind fast food expansion are convenience, quick service and an excellent value for the price. Recently, however, service has slowed with the introduction of numerous new menu items, and the consumer's perception of value for the price has deteriorated, making the fast food sector increasingly vulnerable to competition from family and food-bar restaurants as well as convenience stores and carryout departments at grocery stores.

In light of the softening economic situation, many in the fast food sector will be reexamining price/value relationships. They will also be addressing the issue of menu-price integrity, because the proliferation of price promotions has left consumers confused about the real price of menu items. To help protect price integrity, limited runs of new menu items will be a favored promotional device.

On a more positive note, fast food should benefit if consumers put a lid on expenditures for major durables in 1991. In effect this would free up cash that would allow consumers to maintain a frequency of foodservice patronage that has become a part of their lifestyle. Moreover, fast food, which still has lower price points than most tableservice restaurants, should be particularly attractive to value-driven consumers who may be financially squeezed but may wish to maintain their frequency of visits.

Sales at **restaurants and lunchrooms** are projected to reach $79.4 billion in 1991, accounting for 32 percent of total foodservice industry sales. This represents a 4.6 percent increase over 1990 but no growth in real terms. The lack of real growth for the restaurant-and-lunchroom segment is related to the overall softening of the economy.

Sluggish personal-income growth, combined with low consumer confidence, results in a consumer who is cautious and value conscious. Consequently, the higher-check portion of the restaurant-and-lunchroom segment is expected to be especially vulnerable as cash-tight consumers remain cost conscious.

Many tableservice restaurant operators have already responded to consumer concerns by lowering prices. According to the National Restaurant Association's *1990 Tableservice Operator Survey*, approximately one-third of tableservice restaurants with an average check of $15 per person and higher reported that they had cut prices since January 1989. Even some lower-priced tableservice restaurants indicated they have cut their menu prices—almost one in five operators with an average check of less than $15 per person had cut menu prices over the same period.

Among tableservice operators who had not lowered prices since January 1989, almost one out of 20 indicated that they plan to do so in 1991. Also, more tableservice operators report they have added lower-priced items to their menus. Since January 1989, approximately half of tableservice operators indicated they have done so, and of those who have not, approximately 5 percent expect to do so in 1991.

Restaurant-and-lunchroom-unit growth is expected to be flat in 1991. As with the fast food segment, obtaining the necessary financing for unit expansion will become harder in 1991 because of tighter funding and credit standards required by financial institutions.

As a result of a variety of social and legislative pressures, alcoholic-beverage sales growth at restaurants and lunchrooms is expected to remain sluggish in 1991. National Restaurant Association *1990 Restaurant Industry Operations Survey* data show that alcoholic beverages contributed 22 percent of total sales at full-menu tableservice establishments in 1989. Survey respondents reported that although total food sales advanced 5 percent between 1988 and 1989, total alcoholic-beverage sales were up a lower 3 percent. With federal alcohol excise taxes on beer, wine and distilled spirits scheduled to be raised in January 1991, cost-conscious consumers may find another reason to cut back on their alcoholic-beverage purchases.

Commercial cafeteria sales are forecast to advance to $4.6 billion in 1991—a 5.3 percent increase over 1990 and a 0.7 advance in real terms. Cafeterias are well positioned to take advantage of the consumer desire for food variety, value for the price and control over the meal that is taken to the table. Because customers do not like to stand in line, major chains have responded with upgraded facilities, enhanced takeout services and value promotions.

Since many cafeterias are located in the oil belt, they will get a boost from the increased oil prices. But the demographic composition of their market may work against them. Cafeteria patrons are generally older individuals, a segment of the population that is more fearful of changing eco-

Foodservice industry food and drink sales projected to 1991

	1988 Estimated F&D sales ($000)	1990 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1991 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1990-1991 Percent change	1990-1991 Percent real growth change	1988-1991 Compound annual growth rate
Group I—Commercial Foodservice[1]						
Eating places						
Restaurants, lunchrooms	$ 69,355,980	$ 75,926,973	$ 79,419,614	4.6%	0.0%	4.6%
Limited-menu restaurants, refreshment places	61,397,191	69,800,512	74,128,144	6.2	1.6	6.5
Commercial cafeterias	3,960,224	4,374,432	4,606,277	5.3	0.7	5.2
Social caterers	1,934,596	2,239,820	2,421,245	8.1	3.5	7.8
Ice cream, frozen-custard stands	1,894,213	2,003,699	2,063,810	3.0	−1.6	2.9
Total eating places	$138,542,204	$154,345,436	$162,639,090	5.4%	0.8%	5.5%
Bars & taverns	8,899,046	8,773,391	8,685,657	−1.0	−6.5	−0.8
Total eating & drinking places	$147,441,250[2]	$163,118,827	$171,324,747	5.0%	0.4%	5.1%
Food contractors						
Manufacturing & industrial plants	$ 3,356,495	$ 3,825,121	$ 4,097,719	7.1%	2.5%	6.9%
Commercial & office buildings	1,134,717	1,288,226	1,371,961	6.5	1.9	6.5
Hospitals & nursing homes	1,436,074	1,682,772	1,827,490	8.6	4.0	8.4
Colleges & universities	2,283,774	2,864,756	3,174,150	10.8	6.0	11.6
Primary & secondary schools	1,056,638	1,195,092	1,272,773	6.5	1.9	6.4
In-transit foodservice (airlines)	1,204,892	1,474,795	1,605,466	8.9	4.3	10.0
Recreation & sports centers	1,598,556	1,797,828	1,905,698	6.0	1.4	6.0
Total food contractors	$ 12,071,146	$ 14,128,590	$ 15,255,257	8.0%	3.3%	8.1%
Lodging places						
Hotel restaurants	$ 11,078,650	$ 12,436,762	$ 13,112,265	5.4%	0.8%	5.8%
Motor hotel restaurants	834,008	932,659	982,090	5.3	0.7	5.6
Motel restaurants	1,339,977	1,492,826	1,570,453	5.2	0.6	5.4
Total lodging places	$ 13,252,635	$ 14,862,247	$ 15,664,808	5.4%	0.8%	5.7%
Retail host restaurants[3]	$ 6,456,942[4]	$ 7,317,564[4]	$ 7,786,518[4]	6.4%	1.8%	6.4%
Recreation & sports[5]	2,367,322	2,707,167	2,875,798	6.2	1.4	6.7
Mobile caterers	754,535	840,529	885,077	5.3	0.7	5.5
Vending & nonstore retailers[6]	4,937,911	5,423,085	5,694,239	5.0	0.4	4.9
TOTAL GROUP I	**$187,281,741**	**$208,398,009**	**$219,486,444**	**5.3%**	**0.7%**	**5.4%**
Group II—Institutional Foodservice—Business, educational, governmental or institutional organizations that operate their own foodservice						
Employee foodservice[7]	$ 1,979,671	$ 1,974,052	$ 1,969,149	−0.2%	−5.0%	−0.2%
Public & parochial elementary, secondary schools	3,346,809	3,613,511	3,776,260	4.5	−0.1	4.1
Colleges & universities	3,535,867	3,948,438	4,034,209	2.2	−2.6	4.5
Transportation	983,542	1,180,526	1,284,030	8.8	4.5	9.3
Hospitals[8]	7,826,206	8,901,764	9,476,794	6.5	1.9	6.6
Nursing homes, homes for aged, blind, orphans, and the mentally & physically disabled[9]	3,402,019	3,920,486	4,140,033	5.6	1.9	6.8
Clubs, sporting & recreational camps	1,955,984	2,179,143	2,296,178	5.4	0.8	5.5
Community centers	532,901	627,624	669,675	6.7	3.0	7.9
TOTAL GROUP II	**$ 23,562,999**	**$ 26,345,544**	**$ 27,646,328**	**4.9%**	**0.5%**	**5.5%**
TOTAL GROUPS I & II	**$210,844,740**	**$234,743,553**	**$247,132,772**	**5.3%**	**0.6%**	**5.4%**
Group III—Military Foodservice[10]						
Officers' & NCO clubs ("Open Mess")	$ 659,443	$ 695,404	$ 668,283	−3.9%	−8.5%	0.4%
Foodservice—military exchanges	337,954	341,276	324,212	−5.0	−9.6	−1.4
TOTAL GROUP III	**$ 997,397**	**$ 1,036,680**	**$ 992,495**	**−4.3%**	**−8.9%**	**−0.2%**
GRAND TOTAL	**$211,842,137**	**$235,780,233**	**$248,125,267**	**5.2%**	**0.6%**	**5.4%**

Footnotes:

1. Data are given only for establishments with payroll.
2. Food and drink sales for nonpayroll establishments totaled $4,021,475,000 in 1988.
3. Includes drug and proprietary store restaurants, general-merchandise-store restaurants, variety-store restaurants, food-store restaurants, grocery-store restaurants, gasoline-service-station restaurants and miscellaneous retailers.
4. Reflects revision using new benchmark sales data from the *1987 Census of Retail Trade Merchandise Line Report* released in June 1990.
5. Includes drive-in movies, bowling lanes and recreation and sports centers.
6. Includes sales of hot food, sandwiches, pastries, coffee and other hot beverages.
7. Includes industrial and commercial organizations, seagoing and inland-waterway vessels.
8. Includes voluntary and proprietary hospitals; long-term general, TB, mental hospitals; and sales or commercial equivalent to employees in state and local short-term hospitals and federal hospitals.
9. Sales (commercial equivalent) calculated for nursing homes and homes for the aged only. All others in this grouping make no charge for food served either in cash or in kind.
10. Continental United States only.

nomic conditions and more likely to react negatively during a downturn. Still, the long-term outlook for cafeterias is better than the short-term one.

Social caterers' sales are projected to climb 8.1 percent to reach $2.4 billion in 1991. This represents a 3.5 percent gain in real terms. Despite the fact that some business entertainment has traded down to less expense alternatives, social catering continues to be a convenient means of entertaining. In addition, many Americans are still unwilling to cut back expenses for once-in-a-lifetime events, such as weddings and bar mitzvahs.

Sales at **ice cream and frozen-custard stands** are forecast to reach $2.1 billion, a 3.0 percent nominal growth rate or a 1.6 percent decline in real terms. This segment now has competition from other fast food chains and other establishments that sell ice cream and frozen yogurt. In addition, there is some consumer resistance to prices that have risen too high in terms of perceived value.

Bars and taverns' sales should be down 1.0 percent in nominal growth in 1991, decreasing to $8.7 billion. After adjusting for inflation, real sales should be down 6.5 percent. Increased social and regulatory pressure to reduce alcohol consumption is responsible for the decline in this segment. Also, because of tax increases at all levels of government, the price of alcohol is being raised faster than menu prices.

CONSUMER ATTITUDES AND LIFESTYLE TRENDS

One key trend in consumer lifestyles and attitudes is the fracturing of what were once large, easily definable market segments into what *American Demographics* magazine now refers to as "particle markets."

Among the key population shifts leading to these particles is a change in the nation's age structure from one resembling a pyramid (few old and many young) to one that looks like a pillar (roughly equal distribution of people in youth, middle age and old age). The aging population, including the aging of the baby boomers, has redistributed the population in this manner.

In addition, there has been a shift away from the traditional family household of mother-father-kids to other household structures, including those of single parents, married couples with no children, and "blended households" or step-families. *American Demographics* estimates that by the year 2000, married-couple households will account for barely more than half of all households.

One major cause for these shifts is a slower birth rate. Instead, immigration is driving much of the population growth in the United States. *American Demographics* estimates that by the year 2000, one out of four people in the United States will be a racial or ethnic minority. In comparison, nearly nine out of 10 consumers in 1960 were white.

These major population and lifestyle shifts have helped shape the 25 hot particle markets for the 1990s (see sidebar). Foodservice operators may wish to examine these particle markets to determine which they can best serve competitively with a balance of menu mix, delivery systems and pricing.

The influence of children

Among the 25 "hot" particle markets are children, who will continue to grow in influence in the decade ahead. One reason is that there will be more of them around. In 1989, there were 4 million births in the United States—the largest number since 1964—and the number of births in 1990 seemed to be outpacing the number of births in 1989.

The presence of children in households is important to restaurateurs, because they have an effect on both restaurant spending and behavior. Data from the 1988 *Consumer Expenditure Survey* indicates that husband-wife households with children spent a lower 41.3 percent of their food dollar, or $560 per person per year, on food away from home than husband-wife households with no children, which allocated 43.7 percent of their food dollar, or $834 per person per year to food away from home.

Moreover, per capita expenditures on food away from home increase as the age of the child increases. Married-couple households whose oldest child was younger than 6 spent $446 per person per year (38.3 percent of the food dollar) on food away from home, compared with $538 per person per year (40.3 percent of the food dollar) for married-couple households whose oldest child was between 6 and 17.

Not only do children influence how much households spend on food away from home, but they also influence where their parents eat. A 1990 National Restaurant Association Gallup survey found that 35 percent of parents with one or more children younger than 6 said that the child was "very influential" in the household decision to eat out, as did a similar proportion of parents of children between 6 and 12.

When it comes to selecting a specific tableservice restaurant, 32 percent of parents with children younger than 6 said their kids were "very influential" in their decision, as did a similar proportion of parents with children between 6 and 12.

Children have some influence on choosing a tableservice restaurant, but it seems likely that they may exert more direct input when it comes to fast food. A 1990 CREST special study for the National Restaurant Association on dining-out behavior by family composition found that households with children younger than 13 exhibited differences from households with no preteen children.

Specifically, households with young children had a greater proportion of restaurant visits to quickservice establishments. Conversely, households with no children younger than 13 had a higher proportion of visits to midscale and upscale restaurants.

Households with young children also had a lower per person check average, which can be attributed in part to the lower cost of kid-sized portions and in part to the larger share of occasions on deal. Households with children younger than 13 also had a higher proportion of off-premises visits, weekend (Friday-Saturday-Sunday) visits and dinner visits, but a smaller proportion of breakfast and lunch visits.

How can restaurateurs attract parties with children? A National Restaurant Association Gallup survey indicates that one of the most important criteria for parents in choosing a tableservice restaurant is that the establishment have their children's favorite foods.

Nearly eight out of 10 parents with children younger than 13 rated this factor as being important in their choice of restaurant. Favorite foods among children younger than 13 include hamburgers, french fries and chicken.

Other amenities of importance to more than half of the parents surveyed include speed of service, child-sized menu portions at reduced prices and reduced-price promotions for children. Highchairs and diversions such as puzzles or games on menus and coloring books were of greater interest to parents with children younger than 6 than they were to parents with children between 6 and 12.

Changes in metropolitan America

Although children will play an important role in the decade ahead, other demographic factors are likely to be influential as well.

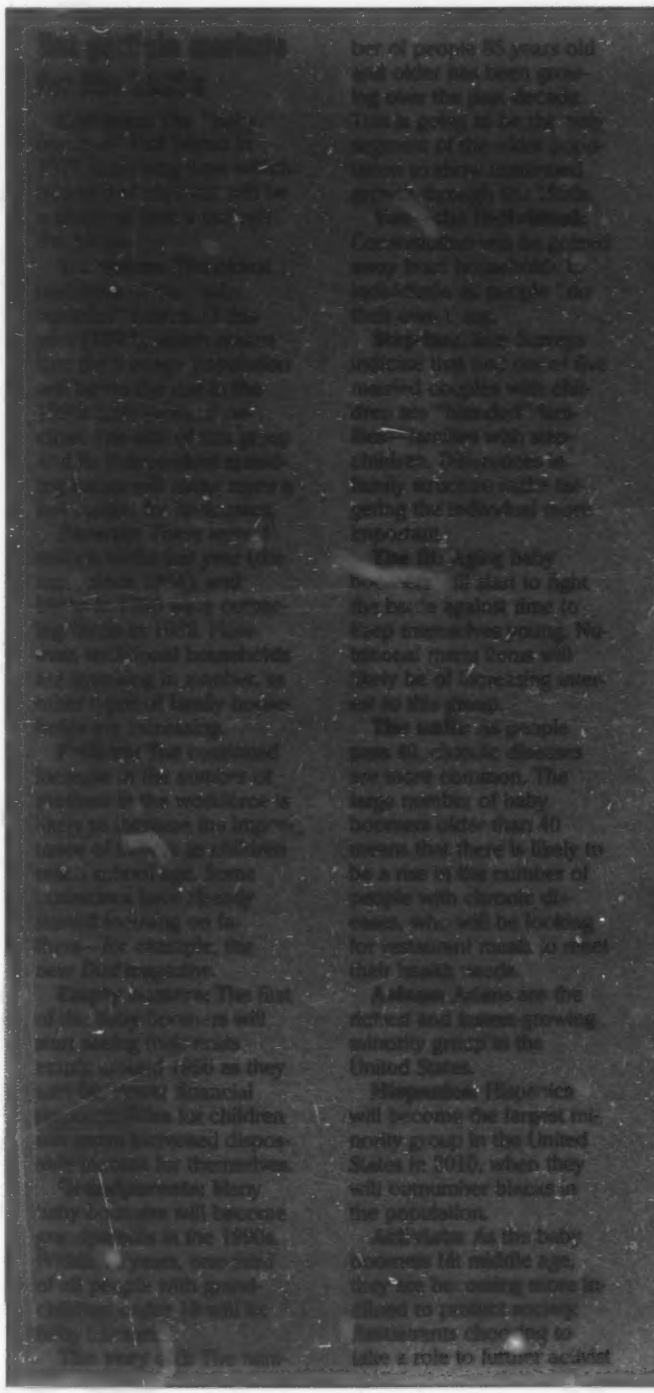
A recently released Population Reference Bureau bulletin, *Metropolitan America: Beyond the Transition*, states that 77 percent of people in the United States lived in metropolitan areas in 1988—more than double the proportion that did so in 1910 (37.5 percent). In addition, the population living in and around these areas shifted in the 1980s, as some areas became magnets for specific groups.

For example, many baby boomers moved away from metropolitan areas in the north, such as Scranton–Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania; Buffalo, New York; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; to areas such as Washington DC, Atlanta, Dallas, San Francisco and Las Vegas, lured in part by greater employment opportunities and the attributes of these areas. The former group, known as the baby-boomer losers—which also includes Johnstown, Pennsylvania; Youngstown, Ohio; Huntington–Ashland, West Virginia–Kentucky–Ohio; Duluth–Superior, Minnesota–Wisconsin; Erie, Pennsylvania; Springfield, Massachusetts; and Syracuse, New York—witnessed declines of more than 5 percent in the population born in the baby-boom years. The latter group, referred to as baby-boomer magnets, enjoyed a growth of at least 10 percent in the number of baby boomers. This group also includes Denver, Houston and Austin, Texas; Colorado Springs, Colorado; and Portsmouth, New Hampshire–Maine. Because baby boomers are in their prime earning years, those areas that have gained baby boomers should benefit from increased restaurant spending while those areas that have witnessed an outflow may have to target other markets to make up for lost revenue.

Baby boomers are not the only group relocating, however. There are 10 metro areas defined as elderly magnets. Eight metropolitan areas in Florida—Sarasota, West Palm Beach, Fort Myers, Fort Pierce, Naples, Ocala, Lakeland and Melbourne—along with Medford, Oregon, and Tucson, Arizona, saw an increase of 20 percent or more in their populations of seniors between 1980 and 1985. In addition, several of these metropolitan areas, in particular Sarasota, Naples and West Palm Beach, may be attracting wealthier seniors. All three of these areas showed per capita personal incomes of more than $21,000 in 1988. The National Restaurant Association's 1988 *Consumer Expenditure Survey* indicated that seniors, like people of younger age groups, spent more money on food away from home as income increased. Therefore, the areas attracting wealthier seniors are likely to reap greater benefits, although it is important to keep in mind that consumer confidence is low among the older population, many of whom live on fixed incomes.

Many metropolitan areas are also seeing shifts in ethnic and racial composition, which will also influence consumer spending patterns.

Although the black population in northern cities, such as New York, Detroit, Philadelphia and Chicago, continued to grow between 1980 and 1985, metro areas in the South and West showed double-digit increases in their black populations. The growth of the black population between 1980 and 1985 in Los Angeles (12.1 percent), Washington DC (10.3 percent), Houston (13.6 percent), At-



lanta (15.6 percent) and San Francisco (11.2 percent) outpaced the nationwide 8.3 percent growth of the black population over the same time period. In addition, these 10 metropolitan areas were home to nearly half of the total black metropolitan population in 1985.

Seven metropolitan areas posted double-digit growths in their Hispanic populations between 1980 and 1985—Los Angeles (32.3 percent), New York (14.7 percent), Miami (30.0 percent), San Francisco (19.4 percent), Chicago (22.2 percent), Houston (33.3 percent) and San Antonio (16.9 percent). Hispanics are particularly influential in Los Angeles (28 percent of the population), Miami (28 percent of the population) and San Antonio (47 percent of the population).

Four metropolitan areas—Los Angeles, Honolulu, New York and San Francisco—are home to nearly 40 percent of the nation's Asian population.* With the exception of Honolulu, whose Asian population advanced 13.9 percent between 1980 and 1985 to 64 percent of the total population, the other three metro areas witnessed increases in the Asian population of more than 40 percent between 1980 and 1985. Restaurateurs in these areas can take heart knowing that Asians are the fastest growing and the wealthiest of all minority groups in the United States.

causes may be rewarded with customer loyalty.

Savers: Baby boomers with children are likely to become increasingly concerned about college costs as their children mature. For restaurateurs, having a high perceived cost-value relationship will be important to attract this group.

The poor: Helping the poor has become a key social issue, and a possible redefinition of the poverty line could put more people in this class. Low price is of major importance in marketing to this group.

The affluent: The number of baby boomers in their peak earning years will increase the number of affluent households, at least on paper. Many in this group feel that their money is committed to necessities, and a high price-value relationship may be needed to attract this group.

The middle class: No matter how high their income, the majority of Americans still consider themselves to be members of the middle class. Therefore, speaking an elite message is not likely to attract the bulk of the population.

Women in charge: Many women now think of their jobs as careers. As their earnings increase, these women are becoming more responsible for the "bottom line."

Workers: Two out of three Americans are in the labor force (the largest proportion in history), and the proportion should increase through the 1990s. Since most of these people are trying to balance home and work, restaurateurs who can make this easier (by providing takeout and delivery, for example) are likely to profit from this group.

Students: More people are going to school at different times in their lives, and it is possible that the number of students older than 18 may outdistance those younger than 18.

Entrepreneurs: Baby boomers who hit a ceiling in their jobs are likely to start new businesses. With more people moonlighting and more people opening home offices, there is likely to be a blurring between work and home. This may lead to more at-home restaurant business.

Vacation-home owners: Since vacation-home ownership increases from age 45 to mid and late-50s, an increase in the prime vacation-home owner population is likely to drive up the number of vacation-home owners. Restaurateurs located in areas of high vacation-home concentration should benefit from increased demand.

Fun seekers: Americans today spend more money on entertainment than they do on clothing. The fun seekers will likely look for "experiences." This could help those fine-dining establishments positioned to offer those experiences.

Housewives: Once the driving force of the consumer market, housewives are still a strong particle market. Housewives have become more unlike their working counterparts.

Source: ©*American Demographics, 1990*; used with permission.

Other notable trends

Another lifestyle trend that restaurateurs have been benefiting from is a perceived decline in leisure time. According to John P. Robinson, professor of sociology at the University of Maryland at College Park and the director of the Americans' Use of Time Project, there is the perception that leisure time is on the decline. Robinson points out, however, that this perception may be false, as the gains in leisure time experienced during the 1970s remained fairly stable through the 1980s.

Whether leisure hours have decreased or not, consumers are making an effort to fit more into each day. As a result, they are willing to pay for such conveniences as takeout and home delivery in exchange for time. The convenience of restaurant meals as an alternative to home cooking will continue to relieve the stress of having to prepare food in a hurry.

**Asian also includes the population of Pacific Islanders, American Indians, Eskimos and Aleuts.*

SERVICE: BUZZWORD OF THE 1990s

As consumers tighten their belts and competition for their expenditures intensifies, value received for dollars spent is likely to become increasingly important. Thus, to satisfy value-driven consumers, it will be necessary to meet or exceed their service expectations.

The service issue is one that demands special attention, particularly in a period when consumer confidence is low and economic expansion is slim. Results of two new National Restaurant Association surveys suggest that some restaurateurs may be overestimating customer satisfaction with service, which could lead to an unexplained loss of customers.

The association's *1990 Tableservice Operator Survey*, a survey of 456 table-service restaurant operators, found that approximately nine out of 10 restaurateurs believe that customers are either satisfied or very satisfied with the service they are getting at their restaurants. In contrast, an association Gallup survey conducted in September 1990 found that a lower 60 percent of adults reported being satisfied with the service they received at tableservice restaurants. Moreover, nearly one out of three adults is ambivalent—reporting neither satisfaction nor dissatisfaction with the service received.

Although these surveys do suggest that most consumers are satisfied with the service they are receiving, there appears to be a discrepancy between the perception of restaurateurs and the actual ratings given

by consumers in the Gallup survey.

This discrepancy can be explained in part by the fact that some customers who are dissatisfied don't complain. Evidence of this practice was documented in a 1986 study by the U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs. That study indicates that 37 to 45 percent of all service customers are dissatisfied but don't complain and that nearly 30 percent of customers who are dissatisfied and don't complain do not return to the establishment.

The association's Gallup survey identifies areas in which consumers are more and less satisfied with the service they received. Seventy-six percent rated tableservice staff as good or excellent in delivering an accurately totaled guest check, and a similar proportion rated servers good or excellent at answering questions about menu items. Sixty-four percent rated servers good or excellent in providing timely service, and nearly the same proportion rated staff good or excellent in recommending appropriate menu items.

Among the five service elements, consumers are least satisfied with the way servers handle complaints. Although a majority—55 percent—said the waitstaff was good or excellent at complaint handling, 33 percent rated servers as fair and 10 percent rated them as poor in this area.

No doubt some who are dissatisfied with how complaints are handled do not return. According to the study by the Office of Consumer Affairs, the problem is compounded by the fact that consumers who are dissatisfied with the way complaints are handled tell twice as many people about their negative experience as those whose complaint was resolved satisfactorily.

Empowering employees

According to a 1988 Sandy Corporation study of service-industry executives, hospitality executives say employees are the key when it comes to providing customer satisfaction. Nevertheless, hospitality executives are not necessarily implementing the customer-satisfaction strategies they say are most effective.

For instance, an overwhelming 92 percent of hospitality executives surveyed by the Sandy Corporation said that providing recognition/rewards for employees based on customer service was the top-ranking customer-satisfaction strategy. In contrast, 64 percent indicated that their companies actually had a recognition/reward program, making it one of the least commonly used customer-satisfaction strategies—ranking ninth out of 11.

In the two years since the study was completed, more companies have begun to put recognition/reward systems in place for employees who provide outstanding customer service, reports Michael Jackson of the Sandy Corporation. As a result, better service is paying off in terms of repeat business and employee retention. By allowing employees to take responsible action to satisfy customers, many get a sense of accomplishment. This front-line responsibility helps foster unity among employees and loyalty to the firm as employees see direct and immediate results from their efforts.

Satisfaction with service at tableservice restaurants

Customers were least satisfied with servers handling complaints

	Percent rating service as:			
Service	**Excellent**	**Good**	**Fair**	**Poor**
Delivering an accurately totaled guest check	26%	50%	20%	3%
Answering questions about menu items	24	50	22	4
Providing timely service	14	50	31	4
Recommending appropriate menu items	15	45	33	6
Handling complaints	14	41	33	10

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey, 1990

Why customer satisfaction is important

For operators not sold on the importance of customer service, a special analysis of 1990 restaurant industry operations survey data indicates that losing just one out of every 20 customers can make the difference between recording a profit or loss for the year.

Using the Sandy Corporation's methodology to estimate the costs of losing customers and assuming a loss of one in 20 customers who never return due to poor service (the overall service sector's annual customer-loss rate as estimated by the Sandy Corporation), a typical full-menu tableservice restaurant would lose 5,623 customers at an average check of $9.23 per person. Adding on an annual advertising and promotional cost of $0.17 per customer means that each lost customer costs the restaurant a minimum of $9.41. Over the course of a year, provided these customers did not return and were not replaced by other consumers, a typical tableservice restaurant would lose $52,892 or 5.3 percent of sales. With a median pretax income-to-total-sales ratio of 3.2 percent for full-menu tableservice establishments in 1989, a potential loss of 5.3 percent of sales would make the difference between posting a profit or loss for the year.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE TRENDS

Economic trends indicate that consumers are becoming increasingly value driven, and tableservice restaurants are responding to this new attitude with lower-priced, easy-to-prepare dishes. Approximately half of all tableservice restaurants have added lower-priced items to their menus, according to the National Restaurant Association's *1990 Tableservice Operator Survey*. This trend is likely to continue, as more chefs use less expensive ingredients to balance lower-priced items. Pastas, pizza and "bistro" fare are examples of items gaining in popularity. Growth in sandwiches, appetizers that can stand in as a meal, and casual meal combinations are another result of this trend. (See "Menu Analysis" section in this report.)

In addition, a back-to-basics style of cooking lends itself to a renewed interest in lower-priced regional fare, including game meats.

Chefs are also creating new culinary hybrids by incorporating ethnic influences from Asia, Latin America and the Middle East into their cooking.

As baby boomers come to realize their own mortality, nutrition may play an even bigger role in the '90s. Current food-consumption patterns reflect this health-oriented trend is well on its way. Consumers are consuming less red meat and more grains, fruits and vegetables.

For example, the consumption of grains, pasta and rice rose rapidly throughout the '80s. The combined consumption of pasta, rice and breakfast cereal increased 55 percent between 1971 and 1988 to 41 pounds per person. Along with health benefits, these items add an extra advantage for the '90s consumer—price.

Use of specialty produce is also on the increase, including more unusual produce like cactus leaves, jicama and chili peppers. According to USDA, shipments of specialty vegetables have increased every year for more than a decade. Moreover, consumer concerns about food safety and environmental hazards have opened the way for organically grown products. Organic food sales rose 40 percent in 1989, reaching $1.25 billion. Increased availability and lower prices for organic foods in the '90s could point to growth for this market.

When it comes to beverages, the health-and-fitness craze has proved to be a boon for the $10.9 billion juice and juice-drink industry. During the next five years this market is projected to expand by 35 percent. In keeping with consumer demand for variety, juice manufacturers are looking toward the exotic with such flavors as kiwi, guava and other tropical combinations. Diet beverages are also expected to post dramatic growth in the next decade.

Bottled and sparkling water, the yuppie beverage of the 1980s, may be the "New Age" drink of the '90s, because these drinks appeal to both fitness-conscious and environmentally concerned patrons. Again, big gains should be seen in the juice-added sparkling-water segment, where sales have increased by almost one-third from 1988 to 1989. Americans' quest for the exotic has resulted in newly introduced flavors, such as spiced mango.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Nutrition and diet became a national issue in the late '80s as government agencies are beginning to get more involved in our nation's health. Two newly released reports set the mood for the coming decade. "Healthy People 2000," by the Department of Health and Human Services, proposes broad public-health goals that emphasize nutrition and physical fitness and focus on minorities. The third edition of the USDA "Dietary Guidelines for Americans" recommends specific individual intakes. Furthermore, recent concern over the growing number of children with high cholesterol levels and a high incidence of obesity has compelled the National Cholesterol Education Program to draft dietary guidelines for this high-risk population segment.

With nutrition awareness at an all-time high, the nation's priorities are twofold: number one is to reduce the intake of foods high in saturated fat and cholesterol; number two, to increase the consumption of complex carbohydrates and fiber. In response to this demand, there has been an explosion of fat-free and low-fat foods on the market.

Aside from foods that are naturally free of fat, fat-free products fall into two categories: products that use manufacturing technology and those that use fat substitutes. Fat-free products that use technology combine familiar ingredients, such as milk, egg protein and carbohydrate, in a process of heating, acidifying and blending to simulate the textural properties and taste of fat. Baked goods, processed cheese, frozen desserts and salad dressings have been successful in this area.

Fat substitutes, on the other hand, can be carbohydrate or protein-based or man-made substances. They either have fewer calories than fat or are not absorbed by the body.

Carbohydrate-based fat substitutes, such as cellulose gels, gums and starches, have been around for more than a decade and are used in a wide variety of foods. Protein-based substitutes are usually made from milk and/or egg protein. One popular fat replacement recently approved by the FDA is a low-calorie, protein-based substitute that provides one to two calories per gram, versus nine calories per gram of fat. Because of its molecular structure, however, this type of fat cannot be heated or it will lose its fat-like properties. That is why it is most appropriate for use in dairy products and frozen-dessert items.

Man-made fat substitutes are called sucrose polyester, a nonabsorbable synthetic compound. Because it has zero calories and more versatility than some protein-based compounds—this product can be heated—sucrose polyester is slated to be used as a partial or complete replacement for fats and oils. However, this fat substitute is still awaiting FDA approval.

In the area of low-fat foods, dairy, bakery and snack foods have shown the biggest product growth. Traditionally high in fat, dairy items in particular have been quickly adapted to respond to the consumer interest in low-fat products.

Thanks to innovative food-processing techniques, low-fat versions of bakery products and snack foods—typically high in fat—are enjoying new-found popularity.

The fiber craze of the 1980s shows no sign of waning in the 1990s. Multigrain products continue to proliferate, as heightened awareness regarding the strong link between increased fiber and the reduced risk of cancer and heart disease has aging baby boomers buying fiber-rich products. This trend is likely to continue as health becomes more important in the future.

Breakthroughs in the field of biotechnology will have a tremendous effect on our agricultural systems and future food supply. Biotechnology is the use of living systems or parts of living systems (such as enzymes) to create useful products. The bacteria required to produce cheese are a classic example of biotechnology that has been used for centuries. Through genetic engineering, the biotechnology of today can increase the efficiency of our agricultural system as well as improve the nutritional value of foods. Disease-resistant, insect-tolerant plants are already in the experimental stages. In the near future, food scientists, using biotechnology techniques, may be able to offer beef with less-saturated fat, calcium-rich dairy products, and better-tasting, more nutritious vegetables.

Foodservice operators are also responding to a changing food supply and increased consumer demand for healthier, lower-fat foods. A 1990 National Restaurant Association survey of fast food and family restaurant chains (with 350 or more units) found that almost 90 percent of respondents use all-vegetable oil and/or shortening exclusively for frying.

In addition, the majority of chain operators feature decaffeinated coffee (89 percent), entree salads and/or salad bars (78 percent), poultry without skin (78 percent), reduced or low-calorie salad dressings (74 percent), low-fat milk (74 percent), fruit juices (67 percent) and margarine (67 percent). Other popular items include grilled-chicken sandwiches (59 percent) and fresh vegetables (52 percent).

Tableservice restaurants are also eager to step up their nutrition efforts, according to a 1990 National Restaurant Association survey. In fact, the survey shows that a vast majority of tableservice operators will alter menu items on request to satisfy nutritional concerns. In most cases, all the customer needs to do is ask, and the restaurant will try to accommodate the request.

Furthermore, a majority of tableservice establishments offer menu items for the health-conscious consumer, and nearly one-half to two-thirds feature menu items on the basis of their nutritional benefits. The proportion of tableservice restaurants promoting the nutritional benefits of its menu items is up dramatically—from approximately 40 percent in the National Restaurant Association's 1988 survey of tableservice restaurants to approximately 55 percent in 1990.

The emphasis on nutrition and health as marketing tools has led to confusion among consumers regarding products promoted by some food manufacturers. This situation, along with consumers' increasing demand for easy-to-read nutrition information, prompted Congress to pass the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act of 1990. This legislation is designed to lessen consumer confusion by developing a uniform system of labeling that mandates specific ingredient/nutrition information (content and format), including standardized serving sizes, to appear on the label. It falls under the authority of FDA and currently covers all processed and packaged grocery-store items. Also included are health claims and such standard definitions as "low cholesterol" and "cholesterol free." Seafood and fresh produce are being considered as well.

In addition, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), commissioned by FDA and USDA, issued its own nutrition-labeling recommendations. Although similar to FDA's proposals, NAS's recommendations expand coverage to include mandatory labeling for meat, poultry and restaurant foods. Current FDA proposals are still being revised but do not plan on including these areas. However, look for more nutrition-labeling activity in the future.

1990 MENU ANALYSIS

When it comes to dining out, Americans want more variety, more menu choices and a more casual dining experience, according to the 1990 menu analysis by the National Restaurant Association. The study looked at changes in restaurant menus over a five-year period (1985–1990) for entrees, sandwiches, beverages, cooking methods and special features (i.e. availability of takeout, children's menus and light or healthy sections). For analysis, 100 menus (lunch and dinner) were randomly selected from those submitted to the National Restaurant Association's Great Menu Contest. Fifty were chosen from among 1985 entrants, and 50 were chosen from 1990 entrants. The results of this menu analysis reinforce the trend toward casual dining.

□ *Sandwiches* grew more dramatically than any other menu item, jumping 56 percent from 434 items in 1985 to 679 items in 1990. Hamburgers/cheeseburgers, beef (other than hamburgers) and chicken were the top three sandwich choices in 1990 and accounted for the largest percentage—58 percent—of items in the sandwich category. Nevertheless, all three of these items showed a slight decline in the proportion of total sandwich entrees when compared to 1985—down by 4 percent, 2 percent and 2 percent, respectively. On the other hand, the number of items and percentage share for seafood, hot dogs/sausage, and cheese sandwiches grew by 3 percent, 1 percent and 2 percent, respectively.* As a result, the sandwich category in 1990 was more diverse, with sandwich types more evenly distributed and the top offerings somewhat less dominant.

□ *Entrees*. Among entrees the mix is changing. In 1990, meat and seafood continued to dominate the entrees category, with meat representing 21 percent of the entree mix and seafood representing 20 percent. Despite the increase in number of meat and seafood entrees from 1985 to 1990, however, these items did slip as a proportion of the total entree mix (by 3 percent). Pasta dishes, chicken-breast entrees and casual-combination meals gained a stronger presence in 1990.

Soup-and-salad combos

The top 10 menu features

Top-ranked features	Percent of menus featuring 1985	1990	Percentage point change
1 Information about side dishes accompanying entrees	56%	62%	+6
2 Light and healthy section	12	34	+22
3 Children's selection	10	30	+20
4 Soup and salad bar offered	16	28	+12
5 Daily/weekly specials	34	26	−8
6 Smaller cuts/portion size of beef offered	10	22	+12
7 Petite/half-size portions for select entrees other than beef offered	4	20	+16
8 Catering/banquets	14	18	+4
9 Symbols for healthy dishes	2	18	+16
10 Takeout/delivery	20	16	−4

Source: National Restaurant Association

**The growth in offerings of hot dogs/sausages and cheese sandwiches can be attributed to an increase in children's menu items in 1990.*

were the major contributors to casual-meal-combination entrees, making up 43 percent of the total mix. Soup-and-sandwich combos witnessed the biggest growth, climbing from 18 percent to 32 percent of total combinations, while soup-and-quiche combos lost popularity, dropping from 18 percent to 4 percent over the five-year period.

□ *Appetizers*, which sometimes stand in for a meal, increased by 25 percent from 382 items in 1985 to 476 items in 1990.

Overall, the greater variety of foods on the 1990 menus reflects the industry's response to the consumer demand for more choices and more customized meals. Both entree and sandwich categories presented greater diversity in 1990 than five years earlier. There were more ethnic dishes and regional items as well.

□ *Ethnic items*. The number of Mexican entrees grew from 73 dishes in 1985 to 99 dishes in 1990—an increase of 36 percent. However, the representation of Mexican entrees in the overall entree mix did not change (7 percent). The number of Asian-influenced foods in both entree and sandwich categories, on the other hand, more than doubled, rising from 33 items in 1985 and 2 percent of the total mix to 85 dishes and 4 percent of the total mix. The most popular Asian-influenced item in 1990 was chicken teriyaki, taking 21 percent of the category.

□ *Regional items*. There was a jump in the number of dishes with regional or locality names, from 57 times in 1985 to 88 in 1990. However, the share stayed the same for both years—4 percent. Overall, there were nearly twice as many different regions mentioned in 1990—49 versus 27 in 1985. One of the 1990 menus even offered a "Taste of the States" section.

□ *Nutrition*. Increased interest in nutrition was apparent in all areas. Not only was there a prevalence of seafood entrees, chicken-breast entrees, pasta dishes and casual-combination meals in the 1990 menus, there was also a growing concern about how items were prepared.

Cooking methods were cited 759 times in 1990 versus 413 times in 1985. Among cooking methods, charbroiling/broiling took the lead in 1990, accounting for 22 percent of total cooking-method mentions, followed closely by grilling/chargrilling (21 percent). Frying ranked third at 16 percent, slipping from its first-place position in 1985, when it accounted for 22 percent of mentions.

□ *Special features*. This section reinforces concern about nutrition and indicates the public's growing desire for more information about the food consumed. This year's menus offer more complete descriptions of foods, more light/healthy sections and a greater number of symbols to highlight healthier items.

More than one-third of menus featured a light and/or healthy-type section in 1990—up from only 12 percent in 1985. The availability of smaller portion sizes for both beef and other types of meals increased substantially in 1990. A combined total of 42 percent of menus offered petite portions in 1990, compared to 14 percent in 1985. Symbols for healthy dishes grew from 2 percent in 1985 to 18 percent in 1990.

□ *Beverages*. There was less emphasis on beverages in 1990 than in 1985, with beverage mentions declining from 233 to 225. Alcoholic drinks posted the biggest drop, falling from 31 percent of beverage mentions in 1985 to 26 percent of all beverage items in 1990. Mixed drinks were down the most; wine and beer mentions stayed relatively equal.

INDUSTRY OPERATIONS

Increased public attention is being focused on environmental issues, especially with regards to the solid-waste problem. Landfills in some areas of the country are reaching capacity, and few replacements are being opened because of siting difficulties. Furthermore, environmental concerns in some locations have resulted in bans or taxes on specific types of packaging, escalating disposal costs and restrictions or fees on specific packaging materials.

Restaurateurs help the environment

As environmental issues grow in importance, restaurant operators are responding by taking steps to help preserve the environment and conserve resources. The National Restaurant Association's *1990 Tableservice Operator Survey* shows that many restaurants are involved in recycling. In 1990, 45 percent of restaurants with sales volumes of less than $500,000 were recycling cans, one-third were recycling paper, one-third were recycling glass and 16 percent were recycling plastic. Establishments with sales volumes of $1 million and more were slightly less likely to recycle—23 percent were recycling cans, 22 percent were recycling paper, 28 percent were recycling glass and 13 percent were recycling plastic.

Municipal solid waste continues to increase steadily—both in overall tonnage and in pounds per capita. According to the Environmental Protection Agency's *Characterization of Municipal Solid Waste in the United States: 1990 Update*, in 1988 U.S. consumers generated 180 million tons of municipal solid waste or 4.0 pounds per person per day. Without source reduction, the amount of waste generated in 1995 is expected to reach 200 million tons or 4.2 pounds per person.

Source reduction has been getting serious consideration, however. A long-term solution, source reduction involves limiting the quantity of solid waste produced and reducing the toxicity of the solid waste that is generated.

Restaurants are becoming part of the solid-waste solution by evaluating and making packaging changes. According to the National Restaurant Association survey of chain operators, in

Tableservice restaurants that are recycling

Many restaurant operators were involved in recycling in 1990

	Sales volume		
Percent that are recycling	**Less than $500,000**	**$500,000–$999,000**	**$1 million and more**
Paper	34%	19%	22%
Glass	33	24	28
Plastic	16	11	13
Cans	45	29	23

Source: National Restaurant Association, *1990 Tableservice Operator Survey*

Computer usage at tableservice restaurants

Accounting and bookkeeping top the list of computer applications in restaurants

Percent using computers for*	Annual sales volume: Less than $500,000	$500,000–$999,000	$1 million and more
Accounting/bookkeeping	86%	84%	89%
Inventory control	49	56	67
Recipe costing	46	37	47
Purchasing	38	44	40
Labor/time/attendance records	35	48	57
Food-product forecasting	24	47	48
Employee scheduling	19	20	29

*of those using computers in their operations

Source: National Restaurant Association, *1990 Tableservice Operator Survey*

1989, nine in 10 chain restaurant operators had worked with suppliers to revise packaging and 76 percent had revised takeout packaging.

Rising costs and restrictions on solid-waste disposal were common in 1990. According to the association's *1990 Tableservice Operator Survey,* three-quarters of establishments with sales volumes of $1 million and more had experienced increased collection or disposal costs, as had 57 percent of operators with sales volumes of less than $500,000. Three in 10 restaurateurs with sales volumes of $1 million and above had experienced closure or limitations on landfills, as had a smaller 19 percent of operators with sales of less than $500,000. Restrictions or fees on specific material, such as plastic or styrofoam, had been placed on 14 percent of establishments with annual sales of $1 million and more and 17 percent of establishments with sales of less than $500,000. One in 10 operators with sales of $1 million and more and 7 percent with sales of less than $500,000 had been subjected to mandated source separation.

In addition to working on solutions to the solid-waste problem, many restaurant operators have taken steps to conserve energy and water. Some are also sponsoring community conservation activities.

International expansion

Important political and economic changes have swept the globe, opening up unprecedented opportunities for many U.S. restaurant companies. Because they are facing saturation at home, many chains are seizing these opportunities and staking out new positions in foreign markets.

While U.S. foodservice companies continue to look at investment opportunities abroad, foreign financiers have invested in U.S. companies. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, outlays by foreign direct investors to acquire or establish U.S. businesses in 1989 were $64.6 billion—down from a record $72.7 billion in 1988 but still well above the levels of previous years. For instance, total outlays by foreign direct investors were $23.1 billion in 1985 and $40.3 billion in 1987.

Computer usage

With the proliferation of computers in our society, it is not surprising that restaurateurs, too, are turning to computers in their daily operations. According to the National Restaurant Association's *1990 Tableservice Operator Survey,* 75 percent of tableservice operators with sales of $1 million and more used a personal computer in their operations, and 67 percent used POS (point-of-sale) equipment—an increase from two years ago. However, restaurant operators with lower sales volumes were less likely to use computer equipment. For instance, 38 percent of restaurant operators with sales of less than $500,000 used a personal computer and 20 percent used POS equipment. Operators are using computers in such areas as accounting, bookkeeping, inventory control and time/attendance records.

In fact, many restaurant operators are using computer software that has been tailored to fit their specific needs. For instance, some pizza establishments use computers to track deliveries and keep records of repeat customers.

No doubt, the use of personal computers will continue to increase in the workplace. According to COMTEC, a division of Gartner Group, Inc., located in Stamford, Connecticut, in 1989 there were 14 million personal computers in use in the workforce, a 30 percent advance over the 10.7 million in 1988.

Labor outlook

Despite the slower economic growth, which generally eases competition for employees, the association's *1990 Tableservice Operator Survey* reveals that labor tops the list of important problems restaurant operators expect to face in 1991, cited by more than one-third of tableservice operators.

According to a December 1989 National Restaurant Association Gallup survey, many restaurant operators have responded to the labor shortage by making operational adjustments. More than one-third of restaurant managers reported that they had installed laborsaving equipment in the past two years. This is especially true for fine-dining places, large restaurants and restaurants located in the West. Dishwashers were by far the most common single piece of labor-saving equipment purchased, followed by slicing machines and computers.

Other steps restaurant managers have taken or anticipated taking include improving training and increasing starting wages. Nearly three-fourths of respondents had improved or expect to improve training, and 61 percent had increased or anticipate increasing starting wages.

Benefits offered

In addition to tapping new

Most important problem tableservice operators expect to face in 1991

Percent who said	Sales volume: Less than $500,000	$500,000–$999,000	$1 million and more
Labor/finding qualified labor	41%	36%	32%
Maintaining volume of business	25	20	22
Increased costs	20	17	17
Inflation/recession/economy	9	14	17

Source: National Restaurant Association, *1990 Tableservice Operator Survey*

sources of labor, installing laborsaving equipment and employing laborsaving techniques, many restaurateurs are enhancing their benefits offerings to attract workers. According to a December 1989 National Restaurant Association Gallup survey, nearly half of restaurant managers said they had improved benefits or plan to do so.

According to the association's 1989 *Survey of Benefits for Hourly Employees in Foodservice*, the most popular benefits provided to hourly employees at foodservice companies with annual sales of $1 million or more were meals and paid vacation leave (provided by 90 percent or more employers).

In addition, more than four out of five companies offered medical/surgical coverage, half offered service awards, 44 percent offered Christmas bonuses and 13 percent offered paid maternity leave. Almost half of respondents provided paid or unpaid leave, other than vacation, for eligible hourly employees to care for sick children, a sick spouse, and sick older family members.

The median benefit costs for hourly employees accounted for 18 percent of hourly payroll costs.

It is important to note that restaurants with sales of less than $1 million often are not able to offer such generous employee benefits.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES

In 1991, the foodservice industry will continue to face a variety of complex legislative and regulatory issues. In addition to labor-related issues, there will be an emphasis on nutrition information and issues regarding health and safety.

Important issues to watch at the federal level include

- civil rights
- child-labor laws
- mandated benefits
- the small-business exemption
- mandatory nutrition and ingredient labeling
- enforcement of the Immigration Reform and Control Act
- the setting of lower blood-alcohol-content levels
- seafood inspection and
- various tax issues.

Also, the federal minimum wage will increase again on April 1, 1991, to $4.25 per hour.

Key state and local issues to watch in 1991 include

- alcohol and meal taxes
- mandated health benefits and
- solid-waste/product packaging.

1991 operations costs

Menu prices are forecast to increase 4.6 percent in 1991, slightly below the 4.8 percent gain in menu prices recorded during 1990. Continued consumer resistance to menu-price increases and the increasingly competitive environment are expected to keep menu prices below the overall inflation rate in 1991. Annual increases in menu prices have remained below 5 percent since 1982.

- **Food:** Wholesale food prices are expected to increase at a slower pace in 1991—3.7 percent, compared with 5.0 percent in 1990. Overall, declining livestock feed prices and increases in production should translate to more modest gains in 1991. On an individual basis, production is expected to increase for both broilers and turkeys, resulting in more-than-adequate poultry supplies and better prices. Domestic production of pork should also increase, making up for the expected decline in imports. Lower prices for poultry and pork should keep price increases for beef down, although grass-fed-beef production is expected to decline as breeders restock their herds. In addition, there will be adequate supplies of dairy products; milk production is forecast to increase in 1991, driving prices down.
- **Labor:** Industry labor costs are expected to increase 5.0 percent in 1991—down from the 6.5 percent advance in 1990. A new federal minimum wage took effect on April 1, 1990, and an additional increase to $4.25 per hour is scheduled for April 1, 1991. Also, the decline in the youth labor force, combined with relatively low unemployment rates in many areas, should continue to push wages up in 1991. Operators are likely to spend more on labor recruitment, training and benefits.
- **Other costs:** Other costs are projected to rise 5.1 percent in 1991, keeping pace with the anticipated overall inflation rate. One influential factor will continue to be the costs associated with solid-waste removal.

MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

To boost customer counts, many eating places have increased their use of promotional and advertising strategies. Evidence of this increase is clear from the growth in marketing and advertising expenditures as well as from growth in deal usage at restaurants.

The increase in promotions is not new, but there was a dramatic acceleration in 1990, according to CREST.* Although the rate of deal usage increased a relatively modest 3 to 4 percent per year between 1987 and 1989, it shot up more than 20 percent in the December-to-February and March-to-May 1990 quarters, when compared to the same time period in 1989.

Now, about one in five restaurant occasions involves some type of promotion, and the proportion is rising at tableservice restaurants as well as at fast food places. Early in 1990 deals accounted for about 23 percent of occasions at quickservice establishments, 16 percent at midscale establishments and more than 14 percent at upscale restaurants—well above levels one year earlier.

Although value-driven consumers are responsive to promotional offers, restaurateurs, who are becoming increasingly conscious of the importance of maintaining menu-price integrity, are focusing on alternatives to the typical price-off offer. Some traffic-building alternatives receiving more attention include

- short-run specials or different menu items available for a limited time at a special price
- lower-priced alternatives added to the regular menu
- frequent-diner promotions and
- other special offers that are not related to price.

**CREST stands for* Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, *a diary survey conducted by the NPD marketing and research companies.*

Frequent-diner programs, similar to frequent-flyer programs offered by many airlines, may become more prevalent at tableservice establishments. According to the association's *1990 Tableservice Operator Survey,* 24 percent of respondents currently offer a frequent-diner program, and an additional 12 percent are planning to offer one in the coming year. These offers are in line with consumer interests. A 1990 National Restaurant Association Gallup study found that 44 percent of adults said they would be interested in such a program if offered by tableservice restaurants in their area.

In addition, many tableservice restaurateurs are changing their menu mix. About half of the respondents to the *1990 Tableservice Operator Survey* said they added lower-priced items to their menus.

Efforts are also being made to correct problems created by undermarketing, according to the National Restaurant Association's *1990 Industry Operations Survey.* A special analysis of survey results indicates that full-menu tableservice restaurants disproportionately increased spending on advertising and promotions in 1989 to $114 per seat—up 8 percent from $106 per seat in 1988. The increase in median advertising and promotional costs outpaced increases in occupancy costs (up 5 percent) and total controllable expenses (up 5 percent).

Restaurants, hotel dining and night clubs spent $1.6 billion** on national advertising in 1989—up from $1.4 billion in 1988—according to Leading National Advertisers. Restaurants and drive-ins spent $838 million on selected television advertising in 1989, accounting for 16 percent of all television advertising sales and making them the number-one ad spenders, according to the TV Bureau of Advertising.

Indications are that restaurants have been responding to changing television viewing patterns, as spending for cable television advertising has skyrocketed. According to the Cable Advertising Bureau, restaurants and drive-ins spent more than $22 million in selected cable television network advertising in 1989—almost triple the $8 million spent in 1988. Moreover, selected cable advertising expenditures by restaurants and drive-ins totaled $15 million during the first six months of 1990—up from $9 million spent during the first half of 1989.

***includes advertising in selected magazines, Sunday magazines, newspapers, and on billboards, network television, spot television, syndicated television, cable television networks and network radio.*

Takeout

In 1989, off-premises traffic represented more than 45 percent of the industry total—up from 42 percent in 1986. Takeout continues to be the driving force behind industry growth and offers expansion opportunities for foodservice operators.

However, since 1987 the rate of growth in the off-premises market has slowed. According to CREST, in 1989 takeout customer counts advanced 3 percent, compared to a 7 percent increase in 1987. However, in spring 1990 takeout traffic advanced 8 percent over spring 1989. Delivery and drive-thru customer counts have continued to grow since 1987, but at noticeably lower rates.

Consumer interest in carryout from tableservice restaurants continues unabated. According to a National Restaurant Association Gallup study, in September 1990 almost half of adults under 55 reported they would be likely to purchase ready-to-eat takeout meals, if offered at tableservice restaurants. The association's *1990 Tableservice Operator Survey* shows that tableservice operators are responding to consumers' convenience needs. In 1990, nine out of 10 tableservice operators with a check size of under $15 offered ready-to-eat takeout meals.

In 1990 more tableservice operators offered bakery items for sale to consumers. In 1990, four out of 10 tableservice operators with a check size of less than $15 per person offered retail sale of bakery items, compared to three in 10 in 1988.

Types of convenience services provided by tableservice restaurants

Takeout meals lead in convenience services offered by tableservice restaurants

	Dinner check size per person			
Convenience service	**Less than $8**	**$8–$14.99**	**$15–$24.99**	**$25 and more**
Ready-to-eat takeout meals	93%	87%	77%	52%
Retail sale of bakery items	44	36	32	21
Delivery of menu items to customers	14	15	15	17
Retail sale of items by the pound	31	31	23	19
Off-premises catering	30	46	42	44

Source: National Restaurant Association, *1990 Tableservice Operator Survey*

MAJOR MARKET OUTLOOK FOR 1991

This section examines sales projections for eight major foodservice markets for 1991.

Transportation foodservice

□ After adjusting for inflation, transportation foodservice sales are projected to grow 4.4 percent in 1991, marking the seventh consecutive year of real growth.

□ Increased fuel costs will most likely lead to higher airfares in 1991,

Transportation foodservice sales: $2.9 billion

	1988 Estimated F&D sales ($000)	1990 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1991 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1990-91 Percent change	1990-91 Percent real growth change	1988-91 Compound annual growth rate
Total transportation foodservice	**$ 2,188,434**	**$ 2,655,321**	**$ 2,889,496**	**8.8%**	**4.4%**	**9.7%**
Contractors, in-transit commercial airlines	1,204,892	1,474,795	1,605,466	8.9	4.3	10.0
Transportation *	983,542	1,180,526	1,284,030	8.8	4.5	9.3

** includes sales on airlines, passenger/cargo liners and railroads*

thus leading to cutbacks in airline traffic and contractor sales for in-transit foodservice. Nonetheless, real sales are projected to rise by 4.3 percent.

□ The booming cruise-line business should continue to help the noncontractor portion of transportation foodservice. After adjusting for inflation, cruise-line sales are expected to grow a healthy 11.8 percent. Continued marketing should help lower-end cruises make up for an expected decline in more expensive cruises. Railroads should continue to benefit from modest passenger increases, especially along the Boston–Washington DC corridor.

Educational foodservice

□ Sales in this segment are expected to grow 0.8 percent in inflation-adjusted terms in 1991 to reach $12.3 billion.

□ Colleges and universities should continue to see an increase in enrollment, despite a decline in the number of those in the prime-age pool. Fall 1990 enrollment at both public and private colleges and universities was up 1.0 percent. With the continued decline of prime-age entrants, foodservice will grow increasingly important in the marketing mix of colleges and universities. This fact, combined with cost-containment efforts, will benefit contractors. Contractors are expected to post a 6.0 percent real sales gain, compared with a 2.6 percent real decline for colleges and universities that operate their own foodservice.

□ Primary and secondary schools should see a 0.5 percent overall increase in the student population. However, while primary schools are likely to enjoy a 1.4 percent increase in enrollment, secondary schools are projected to see a 1.8 percent drop in enrollment. Increased contractor penetration should lead to a 1.9 percent real growth in their foodservice sales to primary and secondary schools, but the category made up of institutions that offer their own foodservice should witness a slight 0.1 percent sales decline in real terms.

Recreational foodservice

□ Total sales in this sector are expected to advance 1.3 percent in real terms in 1991.

□ Increases in sporting-event attendance should help boost contractor sales by 1.4 percent in real terms, while increased movie and theme-park attendance should help noncontractor sales grow by an inflation-adjusted 1.4 percent.

□ National-park visits and some theme-park attendance is likely to be dampened because of economic concerns and increased gasoline prices. Higher airline fares may shorten trip length.

□ Modest increases in club memberships and slight increases in sporting and recreation camps should give clubs, sporting and recreational camps a 0.8 percent sales growth in real terms.

Employee foodservice

□ In 1991 manufacturing and industrial-plant employment should be up by 0.2 percent. Commercial and office employment should grow by a higher 1.9 percent, as jobs connected with the information sector increase.

□ Total employee foodservice sales should grow a modest 0.3 percent in real terms. Contractors should account for all the growth in the segment; their inflation-adjusted sales are forecast to rise 2.5 percent at manufacturing and industrial plants and 1.9 percent at commercial and office

Educational foodservice sales: $12.3 billion

	1988 Estimated F&D sales ($000)	1990 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1991 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1990-91 Percent change	1990-91 Percent real growth change	1988-91 Compound annual growth rate
Total educational foodservice	**$ 10,223,068**	**$ 11,621,797**	**$ 12,257,302**	**5.5%**	**0.8%**	**6.2%**
Colleges & universities						
Contractors	2,283,774	2,864,756	3,174,150	10.8%	6.0%	11.6%
Institutional	3,535,867	3,948,438	4,034,209	2.2	−2.6	4.5
Subtotal	**$ 5,819,641**	**$ 6,813,194**	**$ 7,208,359**	**5.8%**	**1.0%**	**7.4%**
Primary & secondary schools						
Contractors	1,056,638	1,195,092	1,272,773	6.5%	1.9%	6.4%
Institutional	3,346,809	3,613,511	3,776,260	4.5	−0.1	4.1
Subtotal	**$ 4,403,447**	**$ 4,808,603**	**$ 5,049,033**	**5.0%**	**0.4%**	**4.7%**

Recreational foodservice sales: $7.1 billion

	1988 Estimated F&D sales ($000)	1990 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1991 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1990-91 Percent change	1990-91 Percent real growth change	1988-91 Compound annual growth rate
Total recreational foodservice	**$ 5,921,862**	**$ 6,684,138**	**$ 7,077,674**	**5.9%**	**1.3%**	**6.1%**
Recreation & sports centers*						
Contractors	1,598,556	1,797,828	1,905,698	6.0	1.4	6.0
Noncontractors *	2,367,322	2,707,167	2,875,798	6.2	1.4	6.7
Subtotal	**$ 3,965,878**	**$ 4,504,995**	**$ 4,781,496**	**6.1%**	**1.5%**	**6.4%**
Clubs,** sporting and recreational camps	1,955,984	2,179,143	2,296,178	5.4	0.8	5.5

** includes sales at drive-in movies, bowling lanes and recreational and sports centers*

*** A proportion of food and beverage sales in clubs is business-related.*

Employee foodservice sales: $7.4 billion

	1988 Estimated F&D sales ($000)	1990 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1991 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1990-91 Percent change	1990-91 Percent real growth change	1988-91 Compound annual growth rate
Total employee foodservice	**$ 6,470,883**	**$ 7,087,399**	**$ 7,438,829**	**5.0%**	**0.3%**	**4.8%**
Food contractors						
Manufacturing & industrial plants	3,356,495	3,825,121	4,097,719	7.1	2.5	6.9
Commercial & office buildings	1,134,717	1,288,226	1,371,961	6.5	1.9	6.5
Institutional employee foodservice *	1,979,671	1,974,052	1,969,149	−0.2	−5.0	−0.2

** includes sales for industrial and commercial organizations, seagoing ships and inland-waterway vessels*

buildings. The institutions that provide their own employee foodservice may witness a 5.0 percent real decline, as contractors increase penetration.

Military foodservice

□ Planned reductions in troop strength and deployment of troops to Saudi Arabia are likely to depress military foodservice sales at exchanges and in military clubs.

□ In inflation-adjusted dollars, military foodservice sales are expected to decline 8.9 percent overall. Real-sales declines of 8.5 percent and 9.6 percent are expected at NCO clubs and military exchanges, respectively.

Health-care foodservice

□ Total health-care foodservice sales are projected to reach $15.4 billion in 1991, posting real growth of 2.1 percent over 1990.

□ Increases in outpatient care have boosted the number of employees in hospitals, and AIDS patients have kept occupancy rates high. These factors, combined with a stabilization in the length of stay at hospitals, has helped hospital-foodservice-sales growth—real sales are forecast to grow 1.9 percent in 1991.

□ The aging population and slow expansion of nursing homes has maintained high occupancy rates in existing homes. Noncontractor sales in nursing homes are expected to advance an inflation-adjusted 1.9 percent.

□ Contractors continue to make headway into the health-care foodservice area, as demand grows for consistent, high-quality meals and cost containment becomes increasingly important. Inflation-adjusted sales for contractors in health-care foodservice should grow 4.0 percent in real terms.

Lodging places

□ The 1991 outlook for foodservice sales at hotels, motor-hotels and motels is for a 0.8 percent real sales gain. Occupancy rates at existing properties should rise slightly because of slowed expansion of new properties.

□ Convention business is expected to decline somewhat, as many corporations look to reduce travel-related expenses. Higher airfares may lead to more travel closer to the time meetings and conventions are planned, thus reducing the length of lodging stays.

Other foodservice

□ Sales of meals, snacks and take-out food at **retail hosts** are expected to grow 1.8 percent in inflation-adjusted terms. Grocery-store sales are expected to remain strong. Gasoline-convenience stores should continue their growth, because oil companies have the cash to implement strategic expansion plans. Department and drug-and-proprietary stores are likely to show modest sales advances.

□ Real growth in both manufacturing and construction employment and sporting-event participation should help contribute to an expected 0.7 percent increase in real sales at **mobile caterers.** Minimal growth in manufacturing employment and low growth in office employment should depress **vending and nonstore retailers'** sales advances—projected to be 0.4 percent in real terms.

□ Increases in child-feeding programs are likely to offset declines in feeding programs for the elderly. Thus, **community centers** are expected to show a 3.0 percent real foodservice sales growth.

Military foodservice sales: $1.0 billion

	1988 Estimated F&D sales ($000)	1990 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1991 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1990-91 Percent change	1990-91 Percent real growth change	1988-91 Compound annual growth rate
Total military foodservice *	**$ 997,397**	**$ 1,036,680**	**$ 992,495**	**-4.3%**	**-8.9%**	**-0.2%**
Officers' & NCO clubs ("Open Mess")	659,443	695,404	668,283	-3.9	-8.5	0.4
Military exchange foodservice	337,954	341,276	324,212	-5.0	-9.6	-1.4

* Continental U.S only

Health-care foodservice sales: $15.4 billion

	1988 Estimated F&D sales ($000)	1990 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1991 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1990-91 Percent change	1990-91 Percent real growth change	1988-91 Compound annual growth rate
Total health-care foodservice	**$ 12,864,299**	**$ 14,505,022**	**$ [illegible]4,317**	**6.5%**	**2.1%**	**6.8%**
Contractors in hospitals & nursing homes	1,436,074	1,682,772	1,827,490	8.6	4.0	8.4
Hospitals *	7,826,206	8,901,764	9,476,794	6.5	1.9	6.6
Nursing homes	3,402,019	3,920,486	4,140,033	5.6	1.9	6.8

* includes voluntary and proprietary hospitals; long-term general, TB, mental hospitals; and sales or commercial equivalent to employees in state and local short-term hospitals and federal hospitals

Lodging place foodservice sales: $15.7 billion

	1988 Estimated F&D sales ($000)	1990 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1991 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1990-91 Percent change	1990-91 Percent real growth change	1988-91 Compound annual growth rate
Total lodging places	**$ 13,252,635**	**$ 14,862,247**	**$ 15,684,808**	**5.4%**	**0.8%**	**5.7%**
Hotel restaurants	11,078,650	12,436,762	13,112,265	5.4	0.8	5.8
Motor hotel restaurants	834,008	932,659	982,090	5.3	0.7	5.6
Motel restaurants	1,339,977	1,492,826	1,570,453	5.2	0.6	5.4

Other foodservice sales

	1988 Estimated F&D sales ($000)	1990 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1991 Projected F&D sales ($000)	1990-91 Percent change	1990-91 Percent real growth change	1988-91 Compound annual growth rate
Retail hosts	$ 6,456,942*	$ 7,317,564*	$ 7,786,518*	6.4%	1.8%	6.4%
Mobile caterers	754,535	840,529	885,077	5.3	0.7	5.5
Vending & nonstore retailers **	4,937,911	5,423,085	5,694,239	5.0	0.4	4.9
Community centers	532,901	627,624	669,675	6.7	3.0	7.9

* reflects revision using new benchmark sales data from the 1987 Census of Retail Trade Merchandise Line Report released in June 1990

** includes sales of hot food, sandwiches, pastries, coffee and other hot beverages

1991 FOOD AND DRINK PURCHASES

Foodservice industry food and drink purchases projected to 1991*

	Estimated food and drink purchases ($000)
GROUP I: Commercial Foodservice[1]	
Eating places	
Restaurants, lunchrooms	$27,186,446
Limited-menu restaurants	23,892,982
Commercial cafeterias	1,638,364
Social caterers	820,257
Ice cream, frozen-custard stands	581,994
Total—eating places	**$54,120,043**
Bars and taverns	499,469[2]
Total—eating and drinking places	**$54,619,512**
Food contractors	
Manufacturing and industrial plants	$ 1,739,072
Commercial and office buildings	583,769
Hospitals and nursing homes	663,287
Colleges and universities	983,986
Primary and secondary schools	521,837
In-transit feeding (airlines)[3]	770,624
Recreation and sports centers	600,295
Total—food contractors	**$ 5,862,870**
Lodging places	
Hotel restaurants	$ 4,075,392
Motor-hotel restaurants	308,257
Motel restaurants	513,628
Total—lodging places	**$ 4,[illegible],277**
Other commercial	
Retail host restaurants	[illegible]
Recreation and sports	[illegible]31
Vending and nonstore retailers	1,719,660
Mobile caterers	271,719
Total—other commercial	**$ 5,495,405**
TOTAL—GROUP I	**$70,[illegible]75,064**

	Estimated food and drink purchases ($000)
GROUP II: Institutional Foodservice—Business, educational, governmental or institutional organizations that operate their own foodservice	
Employee foodservice	$ 900,919
Public and parochial elementary and secondary schools	3,666,117
Colleges and universities	1,607,061
Transportation	656,673
Hospitals	4,216,068
Nursing homes; homes for the aged, blind, orphans, mentally and physically disabled	2,543,470
Clubs, sporting and recreation camps	905,572
Community centers	790,216
TOTAL—GROUP II	**$15,286,096**
TOTAL—GROUPS I AND II	**$86,161,160**
Food furnished foodservice employees (FSE) in Groups I and II	$ 5,708,737
TOTAL—GROUPS I, II AND FSE	**$91,869,897**
GROUP III: Military Foodservice	
Defense personnel	$ 2,081,839
Officers' and NCO clubs ("Open Mess")	224,911
Foodservice—military exchange	120,964
TOTAL—GROUP III	**$ 2,427,714**
GRAND TOTAL	**$94,297,611**

*Purchases refer to expenditures by foodservice establishments for their food and drink supplies.
[1] Data are given only for establishments with payroll.
[2] Food purchases only
[3] Food purchases only
[4] Reflects revision using new benchmark sales data from the *1987 Census of Retail Trade Merchandise Line Report* released in June 1990

Food and drink purchases for the foodservice industry are forecast to reach $94.3 billion in 1991. Purchases in the *Commercial Foodservice Group*, which account for 75 percent of the total amount spent, should equal $70.9 billion.

Highlights for 1991 food and drink purchases

□ *Eating and drinking places*, which constitute the largest component of the Commercial Foodservice Group, are forecast to record food and drink purchases of $54.1 billion.

□ *Food contractor purchases* are expected to reach $5.9 billion. This group represents the largest component of the commercial segment, with the exception of eating places, in terms of food and drink purchases.

□ Purchases for the *Institutional Foodservice Group*, which account for 16 percent of total purchases, are projected to reach $15.3 billion.

□ *Hospitals*, the largest food and beverage purchaser in the institutional segment, should record purchases of $4.2 billion.

□ *Military foodservice* purchases are forecast to total $2.4 billion. Expenditures for defense personnel, the largest share of military foodservice purchases, are projected to total $2.1 billion.

REGIONAL AND STATE FORECAST

For the 11th consecutive year, the National Restaurant Association has forecast eating-place sales for each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Eating-place-sales performance depends to a great extent on the economic situation in the region. Factors such as population, income, industrial mix and employment all affect restaurant sales. Two indicators that help illustrate the health of a region's economy are consumer confidence and unemployment.

Consumer confidence overview

The Conference Board's Consumer Confidence Index measures people's perceptions of current eco-

Percent change in regional economies (1990-1991)

Region	Population	Total employment	Manufacturing employment	Personal income*
New England	0.9%	1.5%	nc**	1.0%
Middle Atlantic	0.2	0.7	−1.3%	0.1
South Atlantic	1.5	2.1	0.9	1.9
East North Central	0.1	0.8	−0.8	0.4
East South Central	0.3	1.2	0.6	1.3
West North Central	0.6	1.2	0.6	1.0
West South Central	1.0	2.0	1.2	1.8
Mountain	2.0	2.7	2.7	2.6
Pacific	1.6	2.2	1.5	1.7
Total United States	**0.9%**	**1.6%**	**0.3%**	**1.2%**

**in real (inflation-adjusted) dollars*
***no change*
Sources: National Planning Association, *Regional Economic Projection Series;* National Restaurant Association

nomic conditions and their expectations of conditions in the next six months.

Specifically, households are asked whether they believe current business conditions are good, bad or normal and whether jobs are plentiful, not so plentiful or hard to get. The responses to these two questions make up what is dubbed the "present situation" index, as people evaluate the current state of the economy. To determine people's expectations—the second part of consumer confidence—households are asked if they believe that in the next six months business conditions will be better, worse or the same; whether there will be more jobs, fewer jobs or the same number of jobs; and whether their income will increase, decrease or remain the same. The overall Consumer Confidence Index is then derived from both of these assessments. Analysis of the data clearly indicates that there are substantial variations in consumer confidence around the country.

Consumer confidence declined in all but two census regions, when comparing the first 10 months of both 1989 and 1990. Only the West South Central and Mountain regions showed increases in overall confidence, and these increases were small—2.9 percent and 2.1 percent, respectively. Moreover, of the remaining seven regions, six showed double-digit declines in overall confidence. Consumer confidence in the seventh region—the West North Central states—was down by 7.4 percent. Four regions showed declines of more than 10 percent—Pacific (down 10.2 percent), East North Central (down 15.0 percent), East South Central (down 15.9 percent) and South Atlantic (down 16.6 percent), and two witnessed declines of more than 25 percent—Middle Atlantic (down 25.7 percent) and New England (down 56.6 percent).

It is important to examine each region individually to fully comprehend what is going on.

For example, when examining consumer confidence in the New England region, there has been a strong decline in both the "present situation" and "expectations" indexes, which may very well indicate that the region is in a recession. The region has been hit with a soft real-estate market and an increase in unemployment—both of which are likely to affect both the "present situation" and "expectations" indexes.

In contrast, the present situation index is lower in the West South Central region, but it has risen slightly from 1989. Moreover, the "expectations" index in the West South Central region is the highest among the nine census regions. This may indicate that the states in the West South Central region, which were in a recession, are in a recovery phase. In addition, the Persian Gulf crisis has increased demand for domestic petroleum products, some of which are produced in the West South Central region, and this may be part of the reason for the relatively high consumer expectations in the region.

Five of the seven remaining regions have "present situation" indexes above 100, indicating that the recessionary problems being felt in New England and the West South Central states have not yet reached these areas. However, this situation may not last, as the expectations indexes are well below 100 for three of those regions. Most notably, the Middle Atlantic and West North Central regions have expectations below 80. Softening real-estate values; increased commercial real-estate vacancies, particularly in the New York City area; financial-sector layoffs; and some expected decline in defense orders may be depressing expectations in the Middle Atlantic region. The West North Central region may be witnessing a cutback in orders for farm machinery as well as for defense-related purchases because of federal cutbacks.

If the Consumer Confidence Index is a good economic indicator, then the Pacific and South Atlantic regions appear to have the least likelihood of witnessing recessionary problems in the near future. Both regions have indexes well above the national level. This is not surprising as both regions have benefited not only from population growth but also from strong economic growth and tourism.

Shifts in regional unemployment

In October 1990 the national civilian unemployment rate reached 5.7 percent. However, unemployment rates varied throughout the country in response to differing local economic conditions. A look at regional unemployment rates for two comparable months in 1989 and 1990 highlights which regions have experienced substantial shifts.

The New England region witnessed the largest percentage-point increase in unemployment when comparing August 1989 and August 1990 data—up from 3.8 percent in 1989 to 5.7 percent in 1990. This shift is in line with the large decline in consumer confidence in the region. New England was not the only region to witness a rise in unemployment rates, however. Six of the remaining eight regions saw unemployment rates jump over the same period.

In contrast, the West South Central region, which recorded one of the largest gains in consumer confidence, showed the largest percentage-point decline

unemployment rates. The only other region to see a decline in unemployment was the Mountain region, which also showed a rise in consumer confidence.

Regional eating-place highlights

Population, total employment and real disposable personal income are expected to show gains in all nine census regions in 1991. Private manufacturing employment is expected to dip in the more industrialized northern regions of the country (New England, Middle Atlantic and East North Central) and grow in the southern and western regions.

There is considerable variation among the regions, however, and restaurateurs should note how their particular region is expected to fare. For example, the Middle Atlantic region is expected to post a 0.2 percent growth in population and a 0.1 percent rise in disposable personal income. In comparison, the South Atlantic region should see a higher 1.5 percent gain in population and a more dramatic 1.9 percent advance in disposable personal income.

Other highlights:

□ The **South Atlantic** region is forecast to post the largest eating-place-sales advance—6.8 percent, followed by the **West South Central** states—up 6.2 percent.

□ The **Middle Atlantic** region is projected to post the smallest advance in eating-place sales—4.5 percent.

□ The **Pacific** region should record the highest regional eating-place sales—$34.5 billion—just ahead of the **South Atlantic** states, which are projected to have sales of $33.2 billion.

□ **New Hampshire** should post the largest percentage increase in eating-place sales among the states, with a 7.7 percent projected rise. **Florida** is expected to show the second-highest growth—7.3 percent.

□ **California** will again lead the nation in eating-place sales—$26.1 billion. **New York** with $13.5 billion and **Texas** with $12.0 billion are expected to rank second and third.

New England

Outlook

□ In 1991, population in the region should grow in line with the national average, while employment and personal-income growth are forecast to be slightly below the national average.

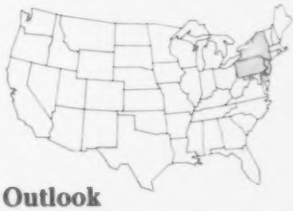
□ Defense industries are expected to benefit from booked orders through 1991, but cutbacks in defense spending should continue to weaken the region's high-tech industries.

□ The region's financial and insurance sectors may see continued softness.

□ Speculative building of high-priced condominiums and houses, which glutted the market in the late 1980s should continue to depress real-estate values.

□ Massachusetts is expected to post the highest eating-place sales in the region ($6.1 billion), but New Hampshire should show the highest sales growth—7.7 percent.

Middle Atlantic



Outlook

□ The region's population, total employment and disposable income are projected to post gains at well below national levels in 1991.

□ The trade agreement with Canada is expected to help local businesses in upstate New York, and new service jobs in Pennsylvania should boost the region's employment picture.

□ A slowdown in defense-related orders may curtail growth in the region's high-technology industries, and the finance industries are expected to continue to contract, consolidate and relocate.

□ Despite virtually no growth in income, regional eating-place sales are projected to reach $26.5 billion in 1991—up 4.5 percent from 1990, with New York contributing $13.5 billion.

South Atlantic

Outlook

□ Strong tourism should continue to help the region's economy, despite rising fuel and transportation costs.

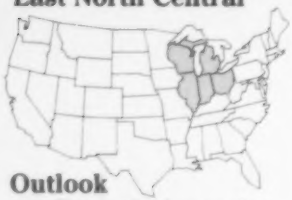
□ Advances in the region's population, employment, manufacturing employment and personal income should exceed national growth levels in 1991.

□ A downturn in defense orders may affect manufacturers in the region, and lower-cost imports may dampen prospects for the region's textile and apparel industries.

□ Service industries located around the region's major metropolitan areas should continue to grow, although at a slower pace than in the 1980s.

□ Regional eating-place sales should rise 6.8 percent to $33.2 billion, with Florida accounting for nearly one-third of regional sales.

East North Central



Outlook

□ The region's population, employment and income growth should lag behind national levels in 1991.

□ A weaker dollar abroad should continue to help manufacturers that produce goods for export.

□ Decreased consumer spending on durables may cause a downturn in the region's automobile and appliance industries.

□ Illinois is forecast to lead the region in eating-place sales with $8.1 billion, but Michigan should show the highest regional sales growth—5.1 percent.

□ Total eating place sales in the region are forecast to reach $27.8 billion—up 4.8 percent from 1990.

East South Central

Outlook

□ The region's population is expected to grow at below-national levels, but personal income growth should outpace national advances.

□ A boost in auto production in Tennessee and Kentucky should help the region's manufacturing sector, as will expansion of high-tech facilities in Alabama.

□ Expansion is expected in the region's durable-goods industries, including machinery, metals and transportation equipment, as well as in the region's paper industry.

□ The service sector is projected to expand in the region, as states look to diversify their economies.

Percent change in state and regional economic indicators: 1990-1991

	State	Population	Total employment	Manufacturing employment	Real disposable personal income	Eating-place sales ($000) 1990	1991	Percent change
New England	Connecticut	0.7%	1.4%	−0.6%	0.4%	$ 2,646,776	$ 2,773,821	4.8%
	Maine	1.3	1.8	0.2	1.8	904,238	953,067	5.4
	Massachusetts	0.7	1.3	−0.2	0.8	5,795,194	6,079,158	4.9
	New Hampshire	2.3	2.8	1.4	2.9	997,753	1,074,580	7.7
	Rhode Island	0.6	1.1	−0.2	0.9	791,722	832,100	5.1
	Vermont	1.4	1.9	1.5	2.1	463,828	496,760	7.1
	Total region	**0.9%**	**1.5%**	**nc***	**1.0%**	**$11,599,511**	**$12,209,486**	**5.3%**
Middle Atlantic	New Jersey	0.4%	1.4%	−1.3%	0.3%	$ 5,177,547	$ 5,436,424	5.0%
	New York	0.1	0.5	−1.3	nc*	12,911,895	13,455,842	4.2
	Pennsylvania	0.1	0.6	−1.4	0.2	7,240,591	7,588,139	4.8
	Total region	**0.2%**	**0.7%**	**−1.3%**	**0.1%**	**$25,330,033**	**$26,480,405**	**4.5%**
South Atlantic	Delaware	0.6%	0.9%	−0.7%	0.7%	$ 498,189	$ 526,088	5.6%
	District of Columbia	0.2	0.1	−1.3	−0.8	948,513	995,939	5.0
	Florida	2.5	3.0	2.5	2.6	9,976,500	10,705,893	7.3
	Georgia	1.4	2.1	1.0	2.1	4,462,091	4,774,437	7.0
	Maryland	0.9	1.6	−1.0	1.0	3,375,066	3,564,070	5.6
	North Carolina	1.2	1.7	0.8	1.9	4,282,243	4,582,000	7.0
	South Carolina	1.3	1.8	0.5	2.1	2,218,340	2,375,842	7.1
	Virginia	1.4	2.2	0.9	1.7	4,429,808	4,731,035	6.8
	West Virginia	−0.7	0.5	−1.4	0.2	892,418	929,900	4.2
	Total region	**1.5%**	**2.1%**	**0.9%**	**1.9%**	**$31,083,168**	**$33,185,204**	**6.8%**
East North Central	Illinois	nc*	0.7%	−1.7%	0.2%	$ 7,731,427	$ 8,079,341	4.5%
	Indiana	0.2	0.9	−0.6	0.7	3,490,212	3,657,742	4.8
	Michigan	nc*	0.9	−0.6	0.2	5,847,320	6,145,533	5.1
	Ohio	0.1	0.7	−1.1	0.3	6,483,041	6,781,261	4.6
	Wisconsin	0.7	1.2	0.4	1.1	2,947,765	3,095,153	5.0
	Total region	**0.1%**	**0.8%**	**−0.8%**	**0.4%**	**$26,499,765**	**$27,759,030**	**4.8%**
East South Central	Alabama	0.3%	1.2%	1.0%	1.3%	$ 2,173,052	$ 2,305,608	6.1%
	Kentucky	0.3	1.1	0.2	1.1	2,173,327	2,292,860	5.5
	Mississippi	nc*	0.8	0.9	1.4	1,049,038	1,107,784	5.6
	Tennessee	0.6	1.4	0.2	1.5	2,816,453	2,996,706	6.4
	Total region	**0.3%**	**1.2%**	**0.6%**	**1.3%**	**$ 8,211,870**	**$ 8,702,958**	**6.0%**
West North Central	Iowa	0.1%	0.6%	−0.3%	0.5%	$ 1,448 197	$ 1,510,469	4.3%
	Kansas	0.6%	1.3	1.3	1.1	1,515,494	1,595,816	5.3
	Minnesota	1.1	1.7	1.2	1.5	2,884,127	3,054,290	5.9
	Missouri	0.5	1.2	−0.1	0.9	3,338,265	3,528,546	5.7
	Nebraska	0.3	0.9	0.6	0.8	937,329	983,258	4.9
	North Dakota	0.5	1.2	2.5	1.1	357,393	375,977	5.2
	South Dakota	0.3	0.9	2.8	1.0	350,813	368,354	5.0
	Total region	**0.6%**	**1.2%**	**0.6%**	**1.0%**	**$10,831,618**	**$11,416,710**	**5.4%**
West South Central	Arkansas	0.5%	1.5%	1.3%	1.6%	$ 1,166,794	$ 1,240,302	6.3%
	Louisiana	−0.3	1.3	−0.1	0.8	2,496,925	2,616,777	4.8
	Oklahoma	0.8	1.5	1.1	1.4	2,003,873	2,120,098	5.8
	Texas	1.4	2.3	1.5	2.1	11,293,402	12,038,766	6.6
	Total region	**1.0%**	**2.0%**	**1.2%**	**1.8%**	**$16,960,994**	**$18,015,943**	**6.2%**
Mountain	Arizona	2.6%	3.2%	3.2%	2.9%	$ 2,322,868	$ 2,487,792	7.1%
	Colorado	2.0	2.8	2.5	2.5	2,485,500	2,612,260	5.1
	Idaho	1.2	1.8	1.8	2.0	481,593	505,191	4.9
	Montana	0.6	1.4	nc*	1.2	435,531	452,952	4.0
	Nevada	2.9	3.4	3.1	3.1	771,311	816,818	5.9
	New Mexico	1.4	2.5	3.0	2.2	952,259	1,009,394	6.0
	Utah	2.2	2.7	3.0	2.9	879,395	933,917	6.2
	Wyoming	1.6	2.0	1.1	2.2	283,516	295,140	4.1
	Total region	**2.0%**	**2.7%**	**2.7%**	**2.6%**	**$ 8,611,973**	**$ 9,113,464**	**5.8%**
Pacific	Alaska	1.5%	2.8%	3.1%	1.8%	$ 524,270	$ 553,105	5.5%
	California	1.7	2.3	1.6	1.7	24,726,818	26,111,520	5.6
	Hawaii	1.4	1.9	−0.2	1.5	1,686,872	1,803,266	6.9
	Oregon	1.3	1.9	0.9	1.7	2,075,946	2,185,971	5.3
	Washington	1.6	2.2	1.4	1.8	3,664,355	3,869,559	5.6
	Total region	**1.6%**	**2.2%**	**1.5%**	**1.7%**	**$32,678,261**	**$34,523,421**	**5.6%**

** no change*

Source: National Planning Association, *Regional Economic Projections Series;* National Restaurant Association

□ Regional eating-place sales are forecast to total $8.7 billion—up 6.0 percent over 1990. Tennessee should have both the highest eating-place sales ($3.0 billion) and the largest sales growth (6.4 percent).

West North Central

Outlook

□ In 1991, population, employment and disposable income in the region are expected to grow at a slightly lower pace than for the nation as a whole.

□ The region's low population growth may dampen increases in service-sector jobs, but relatively low wages should continue to attract financial and insurance-processing firms.

□ A decrease in farm subsidies may offset market-price increases for the area's agricultural products.

□ Cutbacks in defense spending may dampen increases in the region's manufacturing employment.

□ Eating-place sales in the region are forecast to reach $11.4 billion in 1991—a 5.4 percent increase.

□ Missouri should post the highest eating-place sales ($3.5 billion), and Minnesota should post the largest sales growth (5.9 percent).

West South Central

Outlook

□ Higher oil prices and demand for domestic supplies should help the region recover from the oil-price collapse of the late 1980s.

□ Population, total employment, manufacturing employment and personal income in the region are expected to grow faster than nationwide averages.

□ A gradual recovery of the housing market is expected to help the region's real-estate market.

□ Consolidation of the region's financial institutions is expected to continue, and the overall outlook for the business-services sector is expected to improve.

□ Recovery in the area's economy is expected to help eating-place sales, which are forecast to reach $18.0 billion in 1991. Texas alone should contribute $12.0 billion.

Mountain

Outlook

□ In 1991, the region's growth in population, total employment, manufacturing employment and personal income is expected to be higher than in any other region of the country.

□ A slightly higher demand for minerals is expected to fuel some of the region's mining industries.

□ Defense cutbacks and a softening demand for high-tech goods are likely to affect many manufacturers in the region adversely, but higher oil prices should stimulate the region's energy industries.

□ Construction advances are expected in Colorado, but declines are anticipated in Arizona.

□ The region's eating-place sales are forecast to rise 5.8 percent to $9.1 billion in 1991.

□ Arizona should post the highest increase in eating-place sales in the region—7.1 percent.

Pacific

Outlook

□ The region's population, total employment, manufacturing employment and personal income are all expected to grow at above-national levels in 1991.

□ Foreign trade has continued to boost export business out of busy port cities on the Pacific.

□ Growing demand is likely to continue to increase service-sector employment.

□ Defense cutbacks are expected to hurt related industries, particularly in Southern California.

□ Declines in construction have affected the region's real-estate, lumber, stone, clay and glass industries.

□ Positive growth in the region's entertainment and tourism industries is expected to continue.

□ Eating-place sales in the region should top $34.5 billion in 1991—up 5.6 percent over 1990.

□ California should lead the region and the nation in eating-place sales ($26.1 billion). Regional sales growth is forecast to be highest in Hawaii (up 6.9 percent).

How the regional forecast was prepared

The economic sales data for the states have been arranged according to the nine census regions. Included with each state are revised eating-place sales for 1990, projected 1991 sales figures and information on personal income, employment and population data. Much of the economic data in this report is based on information obtained from such sources as the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the National Planning Association and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

The estimates for eating-place sales used here were prepared in consultation with the research firm Malcolm Knapp, Inc. State-by-state historical eating-place sales in 1972, 1977, 1982 and 1987 form the basis for these projections. Special attention was paid to growth trends between 1982 and 1987 for each state's refreshment places (fast food) and restaurants and lunchrooms. Sales figures were then adjusted to reflect current and projected income and population data.

A few reminders

□ Sales projections for 1991 are based on the best available data in late September and early October 1990. If the outlook for general economic conditions or the food situation changes significantly in 1991, these projections will require adjustments.

□ Adjustments were made to arrive at a predetermined U.S. total.

□ Sales figures for each state are subject to a larger margin of error than are the national projections.

□ Actual sales figures represent an overall allocation of total sales in the United States. Although percent changes are subject to more variation, they have been shown here as a convenience to *1991 Forecast* readers.

□ The sales information for states and regions is for all establishments. Figures represent the U.S. Census definition of eating places (SIC Code 5812) and include the sales for operations with payroll and without payroll as well as for contract feeders. As a result, the sales figures for states and regions will not equal the total for eating places. Regional projections were not done separately; and as a result, regional totals are sums of state data.

1990 UPDATE

The National Restaurant Association's revised 1990 foodservice forecast reflects total sales that are $5.5 billion below the association's original forecast of December 1989. The majority of this downward revision—$3 billion—is based on new benchmark sales figures for the retail-host sector from the *1987 Census of Retail Trade Merchandise Line Report* released in June 1990. The remainder of the change reflects lower sales as a result of consumer concern about the state of the economy.

Although industry sales projections were on target through the first half of 1990, gasoline price hikes (fueled by the crisis in the Persian Gulf), a large debt burden, tightening credit and higher unemployment rates led to less discretionary income for consumers in the second half of 1990.

Restaurants and lunchrooms, the largest eating-place segment in terms of sales, posted sales of $75.9 billion in 1990. Although this represents a 4.4 percent advance, sales actually declined 0.4 percent in inflation-adjusted dollars. This decrease reflects continued weak performance among higher-check establishments, as consumers became increasingly more value driven and price conscious. In addition, alcoholic-beverage sales continued to be sluggish because of social and legislative pressures.

Sales at limited-menu (fast food) restaurants were $69.8 billion, a 6.1 percent advance, with real growth for the segment at 1.3 percent over 1989. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the recent economic downturn combined to lower fast food sales, primarily because these events occurred during a peak tourism period, when business is normally brisk. Moreover, consumer resistance to pricing in terms of value received contributed to lower sales growth in fast food restaurants.

Commercial-cafeteria sales experienced no real growth between 1989 and 1990. Projected sales were $4.4 billion, reflecting an increase in current dollars of 4.8 percent. Cafeterias are frequented by older consumers, who responded more negatively than the general public to the nation's economic uncertainty.

Social caterers recorded the highest real growth among eating places—up 2.6 percent over 1989 to exceed $2.2 billion. Growth in current dollars was 7.4 percent. Continued emphasis on social occasions, such as weddings, as well as greater efforts by businesses to promote their products and services contributed to this segment's growth.

Ice cream and frozen-custard stands posted the largest real sales decline among eating places in 1990—down 2.3 percent to $2 billion. Unit expansion slowed. The product was also offered and heavily promoted by fast food operators. The result was a shift in consumer purchases of these highly focused offerings to other foodservice operations.

—Elizabeth Gordon
—Nancy Michalski
—Susan Mills
—Hudson Riehle
—Diane Welland

Foodservice industry food and drink sales 1989–1990

	($000)		Percent change	
	1989	1990	Current dollars	Constant dollars
Commercial Foodservice Group	$198,362,280	$208,398,009	5.0%	0.2%
Eating places	146,716,194	154,345,436	5.2	0.4
☐ Restaurants and lunchrooms	72,726,986	75,926,973	4.4	−0.4
☐ Limited-menu (fast food) restaurants, refreshment places	65,774,810	69,800,512	6.1	1.3
☐ Commercial cafeterias	4,174,076	4,374,432	4.8	0.0
☐ Social caterers	2,085,494	2,239,820	7.4	2.6
☐ Ice cream, frozen-custard stands	1,954,828	2,003,699	2.5	−2.3
Bars and taverns	8,952,440	8,773,391	−2.0	−7.3
Total eating and drinking places	155,668,634	163,118,827	4.8	0.0
Institutional Foodservice Group	24,900,720	26,345,544	5.8	0.8
Military Foodservice Group	1,030,855	1,036,680	0.6	−4.2
Total industry sales	**$224,293,855**	**$235,780,233**	**5.1**	**0.3**

How the 1991 forecast was prepared

The National Restaurant Association's projections for 1991, revised projections for 1990 and final estimates for 1988 are published here. Comparable historical data encompassing the period from 1970 through 1987 have been published in *Foodservice Numbers* and *Year in Review*.

The association's annual industry forecast for 1991 includes both nominal and real percentage changes in sales for all industry sectors. Real growth is calculated separately for each market segment. In the case of eating places, the projected percentage increase in menu prices is subtracted from the percentage increase in sales. For drinking places, it is necessary to make a special estimate of the inflation factor, which is weighted more heavily toward alcoholic beverages.

For other industry sectors, such as colleges and universities, where expenses are largely determined by food costs, a modification of the Producer Price Index of food is used. Modifications to this index are based on historic patterns for each industry sector. The food-cost component constitutes the base percentage increase, which is adjusted to reflect population changes and other pertinent factors such as labor and overhead costs.

To arrive at 1991 real (inflation-adjusted) sales figures for the total foodservice industry as well as for the Commercial and Institutional Foodservice Groups, revised 1990 sales were multiplied by the respective 1991 real growth factors. The real sales figures for each of these sectors were added and compared with 1990 sales to obtain real growth for the industry and the two major segments.

A word of caution

Sales projections are based on the best data available in late September and early October 1990. If the outlook for general economic conditions or the food situation changes significantly in the coming year, these projections will require adjustment. In addition, the performance of individual companies or sales in local market areas may differ substantially from the United States outlook.

ADVERTISING ON MENUS YES OR NO

by Carolyn Crowley

In a real break with tradition, some restaurateurs are placing ads on their menus. Others decry the practice. Here are some views for and against.

YES

"Advertising is cost effective and helps pay for my menus," says Jim Redeau, owner/manager of Tracy's Restaurant in Great Falls, Montana, a 24-hour restaurant that is on the Missouri River and serves 300 people a day. The restaurant's six-page foldout menu with its 200 selections is one of the largest in the Northwest, and it is one that accepts advertising. Twenty-three advertisers pay $40 to $50 a year for the ads that appear on the menu's last two bright red pages in commencement-brochure style—businesses like Dahl's, a hair salon for men and women; Collector's Corner, with antiques and furniture collectibles, "four doors down from Tracy's"; and Gomer's Diesel & Electric, Inc., "Serving Montana for 50 years."

"I wouldn't put an ad in my menu for someone I wouldn't recommend. I have to check the people out and shake the owner's hand," Redeau says. He has direct experience with all the advertisers because he does business with each one. "It's a good way to talk with your purveyors," he says. A customer may point to the Gomer's ad and ask Redeau if "this is a good place to get my car fixed. I say, 'Yes, because I take my car there.' "

For 25 of the restaurant's 38 years, the menu has carried advertising. It started when an ad man from Minnesota came to Montana "and sold my father advertising. He later sent 400 menus and kept the profit," Redeau remembers. "Now I print 50 menus, laminate them and they last one year. I sell advertising—it takes a month—and I keep the profit. How much? If you tell everyone your business, you have none. The printing and laminating cost $200."

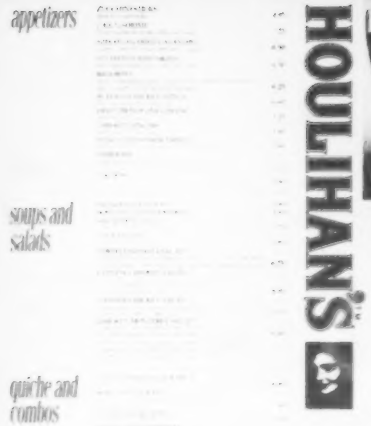
Redeau has more takers than space and finds he must turn down at least a dozen advertisers. He doesn't mind because he likes to be selective. "There are some businesses I don't want in my menu," he says.

He says he's "surprised" more restaurants aren't accepting advertising for their menus because "it's not that hard to do."

Canada's first organization producing menu advertising is Toronto's Kalen Group, which publishes "Mr. Greenjeans' Great Adventure," a Canadian adventure-travel "passport." The "passport" is much more than an introduction to the menu; it is filled with so much trivia and adventure pointers that customers often buy it for C$1.50. All proceeds go to the Children's Wish Foundation.

Although the menu itself is a break with tradition, it is very much in keeping with the mood of the restaurant. Mr. Greenjeans, which seats 400, is one of Canada's largest full-service restaurants, serving 800,000 people a year. It is divided into six adventure-travel areas—hot-air ballooning, bicycling through Europe, a South American rain forest, white-water rafting, rock climbing and hiking. A multi-screen mock-up of an airport departure area greets customers, giving them the idea they're leaving on an adventure when they enter the restaurant.

"Our subtle advertising is meant to



Launched in March 1990, this newest advertising/menu collaboration is a general-interest magazine targeted to the affluent "untouched market" of single, divorced and widowed people in the United States who like to eat in restaurants but feel uncomfortable dining alone.

defray the cost of the menu [C$100,000], not to make money. All the tightly controlled ads [nearly two dozen] are related to adventure. We are trying to create an interesting, informative and entertaining document," says Maury Kalen, editor.

"We think of our advertisers as sponsors," he adds. "We feature their products." For example, servers wear Roots clothes. Roots is a Canadian clothing store specializing in leather. It has a full-page, two-color ad in Mr. Greenjeans' menu.

In the "adventure passport," the ads, travel trivia and menu are interspersed playbill style. "All the food is on the right-hand pages, so ordering is not difficult," Kalen says. The center spread, a monthly array of when and where to visit the world's greatest resorts, is the placemat. On the bottom of most pages are international pithy thoughts, such as "In Spain, 'embarrassed' means you are pregnant" and "Waving at someone in Greece is a serious insult."

In addition, there are columns filled with trivia. The "FYI" column announces that the most expensive hotel suite is Spain's $3,000-a-day Marbella Dinamar Hotel, which requires a minimum three-month stay. The "Kidding Around" column challenges the reader to try three activities, including attempting the world's most difficult tongue twister, "Unique New York . . . Bet you can't say it three times quickly."

Kalen notes that it took one year to "put the menu in place. There aren't many people who have the talent, money and commitment to make menus like ours. Customer response has been overwhelmingly positive," he adds. "Not one person has said, 'Why do I need this advertising?' or considered it commercial."

Perhaps the newest advertising/menu collaboration is the menu magazine, such as the 30-page bimonthly *Knife & Fork*, offered by restaurant franchiser The Riese Organization and publisher Performance Network, Inc., in Lindenhurst, New York. Since it first appeared in March 1990 in 65 Manhattan restaurants, its circulation has shot to 1.2 million. It combines the glitter of a four-color glossy, upscale magazine with feature stories and consumer product and service advertisements. A restaurant menu is bound into its center spread.

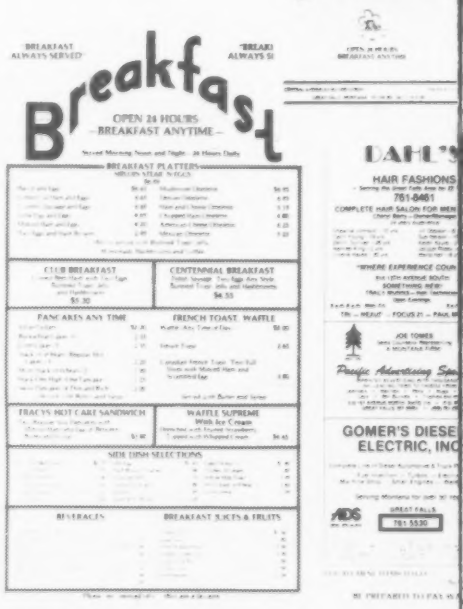
The menu took "well over seven figures" and 18 months of planning to get started, notes Richard Neste, publisher. *Knife & Fork* runs cigarette, beer, car, bank, Coca-Cola and Sony ads, among others—all targeted to young consumers who average 29 years of age and earn about $53,000 a year. Editor Lee Barstow notes that 87 percent of the "upscale sophisticated" readers are college educated and 61 percent own one or two cars and 12 percent own three cars.

The editorial content of *Knife & Fork* features general lifestyle articles, such as looking for love in personal ads, secrets of doodles and the anatomy of a plane crash. There are also regular departments that offer personality profiles, clothing advice and puzzles and games. "We have a little bit of everything, including tidbits of information, such as how hot dogs are made, and whether blue or brown eyes attract more members of the opposite sex (blue do, two to one)," says Neste.

The reason the magazine began and is now successful is the "untouched market" of single, divorced and widowed people in the United States who like to eat in restaurants but feel uncomfortable dining alone. The menu magazine gives them "a true memento of the occasion," Neste says.

While other magazines must raise their prices partly due to rising postal rates ("They're going up 23 to 25 percent this year alone," Neste moans), *Knife & Fork* doesn't have to consider Postal Service financial actions, because it distributes directly to restaurants, including Houlihan's, Lindy's, El Torito, Tequila Willie's, Ground

Two pages of Tracy's six-page fold-out menu are devoted to ads from local purveyors. The ads are so popular that owner Jim Redeau must turn down some potential advertisers.



In Canada, the Kalen Group has created "Mr. Greenjeans' Great Adventure," an adventure-travel "passport" that intersperses ads and travel trivia with the menu. Customers often buy the passport to take home.

Round, Beefsteak Charlie's and Toot Shor's. Its cover price is $2.25, but it is distributed free to restaurant diners. A year's subscription costs $9.95.

"My aim is to make the magazine compelling enough so that people will want to take it with them," Barstow says.

Advertisers who have made long-term commitments to *Knife & Fork* include Coca-Cola, National Westminster Bank, Campbell Soup, Schieffelin & Somerset and Philip Morris.

NO

Not everyone likes the idea of menu advertising. "Someone would pay us to advertise?" marvels Steve Sawitz, a member of the family that for four generations has owned and operated Joe's Stone Crabs in Miami. During the months it's open (October to May), this 400-seat restaurant sells 250 tons of crabs.

"I don't like it. It's greedy," he adds. "It would be like advertising on the Statue of Liberty, Air Force One or the Washington Monument. They're symbols of the United States. Our menu is pure, a symbol of our restaurant. Advertising would take away from the sanctity of our menu."

Word of mouth, "a truthful approach," is the best advertising, he believes. Joe's Stone Crabs advertises in *The Miami Herald* and a couple of local magazines, including several that tourists find in their hotel rooms.

Also opposed to menu advertising is Richard McDaniel, the restaurant's crab inspector. "It's insulting to customers, who are already inundated with advertising on TV, radio, magazines and billboards. What would an advertisement mean to our customers anyway? Our purveyance is food and not cars, TVs or whatever they're selling with advertising," he says.

Paul Saginaw, one of the four owners of Zingerman's Delicatessen in Ann Arbor, Michigan, a $4-million-a-year business that specializes in jams, cheeses, and cured meat and fish, shares this sentiment: "I hope my business is never in such a desperate state that I have to prostitute my menu," he says. "We use some menu space to promote our products. Why do I want to sell someone else's products I have no control over? Don't I think enough of my products to sell only them?"

Rob Cagle, a manager at Brennan's of Houston, doesn't ever want to see menu advertising in his restaurant. "I want customers to be solely concentrating on what I'm trying to sell them."

Eateries shouldn't be "commercialized," says Tony Vallone, owner of Tony's Restaurant in Houston, which features an "innovative European menu." "Restaurants should show personal touches and the warmth and creativity of the restaurateur. In a restaurant you should feel as if you're in someone's living or dining room."

MAYBE

Jonathan Evans, manager of Boston's Jacob Wirth Restaurant, which has been at the same location since 1886, doesn't have advertising on his menus but likes the idea. He's noticed that advertising has "gotten to the level where even churches accept it"—even his own church's bulletin. "I don't find it offensive. It's not a sensitive issue now because everyone's advertising. It's the only way to get by," he muses.

Evans can imagine a menu based on tourism with ads from a trolley car company that does local tours, from scenic walking tours, from the John Hancock Tour ("Take the elevator to the top to see all of Boston"), from the Museum of Fine Arts and from the Visitors Information Center.

His advertisers would have to meet some criteria, he emphasizes. "We don't want a local strip club. We want taste. We're a German-American restaurant, so maybe we would have a Lufthansa ad to add a German theme or advertising from a local business."

Evans says he sees definite advantages to the practice. "With advertising I could get an outside printer to produce a menu with color on better paper. Now I run it off on a laser printer. I'll look into this. I would like to have someone approach me with an advertising package." ❑

Carolyn Crowley is a freelance writer in Washington DC.

HAS DISTRIBUTOR LED TO BETT

by Paul Moomaw

Maybe you've noticed that your foodservice distributor is offering more items at more-competitive prices, or perhaps you're receiving fewer deliveries and less personal service. Whatever your experience, chalk up these changes to corporate consolidation.

"The consolidation of distributors has been the news for the last several years," says Jim Cremins, president, chief executive officer and part-owner of Carmine Foods in Richmond, Virginia. Changes in foodservice distribution in recent years have been based on the premise that for purposes of distribution, bigger is better.

Distributors of the past were often local warehousers who offered foodservice customers frequent deliveries and personal service. The proliferation of restaurant chains and multi-unit operators in the 1970s and 1980s, however, has made many distributors adopt new strategies aimed at servicing these large accounts, including combining warehouse operations in overlapping geographic areas and streamlining warehouse efficiency through computerization.

Customer relations have also changed. Program selling, for instance—the practice of forming a buying contract between operator and distributor—has taken distribution from a hands-on, retail-type transaction to a sophisticated, commodity-like transaction, as if two Chicago futures traders were hedging their bets on food prices. Program selling seems tailormade both for the sophisticated distributor, who can plan for large orders and a limited number of deliveries in advance, and for multi-unit operations, whose buyers can negotiate price ranges.

This industry consolidation has resulted in three tiers of distributors—(1) national distributors whose annual sales run into the billions of dollars, (2) large regional distributors and (3) small independent distributors, with annual sales of less than $50 million.

"The result of the consolidation," says Cremins, "is that all but the largest players are eliminated from the national account." Instead, he says, most chains opt for a nationwide distributor with greater buying power.

Where does this leave the small operator, who is concerned with on-time delivery, fair pricing and responsive service?

The trickle-down effect

Theoretically, the benefits of increased efficiencies that larger distributors offer trickle down to operators in the form of competitive prices and the offering of a wider selection of items. With high sales volume, the reasoning goes, larger distributors can operate at lower margins. In addition, a large distributor can carry more items in stock, which can be a convenience to customers. But service can sometimes change.

Typical of the move toward consolidation is Food Services of America (FSA), a large regional distributor headquartered in Kent, Washington. FSA was formed in a 1986 buyout and merger, and it has become a large player engaged in an "aggressive" growth strategy, according to Tom Staley, vice president and general manager of the Missoula, Montana, distribution branch of FSA. Staley has positive feelings about the company's growth. "We can offer better, more efficient service," he says. The strategy is working at the Missoula branch, with sales skyrocketing over those of a year ago.

But as part of its consolidation strategy, FSA recently closed its Great Falls warehouse, and now it services customers in Great Falls from its Missoula warehouse, about 180 miles west, across the Continental Divide. Not all customers are pleased with this move. Diane Guy, president and general manager of El Comedor Mexican restaurant in Great Falls, notes that deliveries that once arrived by 7 or 8 a.m., now come in at 10 or 11 a.m. In fact, she says the decreased convenience has led her to transfer some orders to another distributor. In the harsh Montana winter that makes some mountain roads hard to travel, Guy's uncertainty increases even more. "In the winter, you never know when you'll get your delivery," she says.

Staley admits there can be hard feelings when a distributor closes a warehouse in a town. "You can't always consolidate as smoothly as you'd like," notes Staley. "Sometimes there's some ill will." FSA has tried to

Cooperative buying

Cooperative buying occurs when a group of operators join together to purchase products. The operators benefit from quantity-discount prices as the result of bulk buying. An advantage of cooperative buying is that standardized quality as well as lower prices should result because of the group's volume purchasing. Also, individual group members may have to spend less time with supplier sales representatives, and thus they have more time for other day-to-day operations.

Cooperative buying has some disadvantages, because the purchasing decision is usually turned over to a committee. Committees are notorious for slowing down any process and sometimes find a decision consensus difficult. Further, individual members of the group may lose some control over supplier selection, loyalty, product variety and product quality because that task must be delegated to the committee.

Where cooperative purchasing is used,

CONSOLIDATION

ER SERVICE?

get around the problem by keeping the local sales force intact, so that customers continue to do business with the same sales people.

Consolidation can help

Although the local moves made by FSA have not proved advantageous to El Comedor's Diane Guy, another consolidation by a long-time distributor has proven to be beneficial to her business. When Continental Keil was purchased by the Sysco organization, Guy reports, she "found high-quality Mexican-food products that weren't available here before, such as flour tortilla mix. When Sysco had its food show, I talked to the representatives about Mexican-food items, and they actually knew what I was talking about.

"Price isn't my total driving factor," adds Guy. "Service is very important. It pays to shop around, but it's also important to build up some loyalties." Guy uses about a dozen distributors.

members have to agree on the quality of standards and specifications for required products so that advantage can be taken of volume purchasing of identical products. This task is time-consuming because, without agreement, the method cannot succeed. Compromise by some participants in the cooperative is often required.

Note that cooperative buying does not require that all products for all participants be purchased through the cooperative. Participants should be free to purchase some products independently (particularly those unique to their operation), although this flexibility does decrease the ability of the cooperative to negotiate lower prices on all products.

Finally, a cooperative buying arrangement should be established and operated under the guidance of legal counsel to ensure that federal and state antitrust laws are not violated.

—from *Hospitality Industry Purchasing* by Michael Coltman (1990) by Van Nostrand Reinhold. Reprinted by permission. "All Rights Reserved."

A matter of service

With margins being squeezed and the focus of distributors leaning toward high volume, John Heim, general manager of Bunzl Distribution in Tempe, Arizona, [which closed in October] fears for the livelihood of the mom-and-pop distributor. And he thinks restaurateurs should do something about it: patronize small distributors and the level of service they offer, because "to a large distribution company, the small operator's business is not significant."

Heim believes the small, local distributor should be patronized if only to offer an alternative to the behemoths.

What can a smaller distributor offer that a large one cannot? "We can respond better and quicker to our customers," says Cremins of Carmine Foods, which covers primarily the state of Virginia. "It's the art of nichemanship, and we fit in with the independent operator. It's easier to build a relationship with a mom-and-pop."

In most cases Heim admits that the local distributor providing personal service has to charge a bit more, but the service an independent restaurant receives is worth it. "With a small mom-and-pop distributor the communication process is better," says Heim. "You can call and get the owner on the phone in two seconds if you've got a problem. In a large, bureaucratic organization, the communication layers limit your ability to take care of a problem."

As owner and operator of Jay's Fish & Chips in Santa Maria, California, for 20 years, John Yurasek enjoys the trustful relationships and rapid response that small, family-operated distributors can provide. "I've been dealing with the same seafood supplier for 18 years, and I don't think the big people can compete with him on price."

Yurasek is a big believer in the building of a trusting relationship with his distributors. Yurasek keeps his distributors happy by having payment checks ready at delivery time. "Let's put it this way," says Yurasek of the personal relationships he has built with family-run distributors, "I've never filled out a credit reference."

Striking a balance

Meanwhile, Rocco Muriale, owner/operator of Muriale's in Fairmont, West Virginia, has found a successful balance by employing a limited number of distributors, including both small, local purveyors and one large, broad-line distributor. For produce and meat, Muriale patronizes local distributors with whom he has had long-time relationships. In fact, one of his distributors is run by the son of a purveyor who serviced the restaurant when it was still run by Muriale's father.

At the same time, Muriale relies on the Pittsburgh branch of the national distributor Rykoff-Sexton because he likes "the quality products they sell, and they always have a quality salesperson." Muriale believes in building a relationship with distributors, no matter what their size, and sticking with them. "I like to keep a small, tight-knit group of purveyors," says Muriale, who doesn't like to see many salespeople in the course of a day. "I would rather give one person $100,000 of business than 10 distributors $10,000 each." It gives more control and better pricing leverage.

What the future may bring

Bunzl's Heim is convinced that consolidation will continue, but he sees a place for small, niche distributors specializing in a particular line of products, such as paper or fish. These will be the small players that will sell to independent restaurants that have trouble meeting the minimum order requirements of the large distributors. □

Paul Moomaw is a communications specialist at the National Restaurant Association.

TIRAMISU

by Leslie Pietrzyk

Italian food is usually perceived as a cuisine of pounds: lusciously thick cream sauces, towering mounds of pasta, dense lush layers of lasagna and delectable slabs of veal. Even the coffee is crowned with whipped cream. Could there possibly be room for dessert after a meal of such proportions?

More and more restaurant operators are finding that yes, there's always room for *tiramisu* (teer-a-me-su), a traditional northern Italian dessert that's making American diners reach for the dessert menu.

The word is loosely translated as "pick-me-up," and the mystery is which of the uplifting classic ingredients gave the dish its name: The espresso? The liqueur? Or the way the silky-smooth custard layers the ladyfingers?

"Tiramisu is a great dessert. It's a *semifreddo*—half cake, half ice cream," explains Andrea Bullo, the manager of Los Angeles' Chianti and Chianti Cucina—the former a 60-seat formal Italian restaurant, and the latter a more informal 40-seat trattoria. "Semifreddo" refers to Italian desserts that are based on a chilled, uncooked custard, usually a combination of cream or cheese and eggs. According to Bullo, a classic tiramisu is composed of ladyfingers dipped in espresso with mascarpone cheese and dusted with cocoa powder.

A big seller

All across the country, more and more restaurant-goers are becoming acquainted with this newly discovered Italian favorite. "Tiramisu is our biggest seller," comments Karen Shannon, co-owner of Petitto's Ristorante d'Italia, a northern Italian-style pasta restaurant and sidewalk cafe in Washington DC. She and her partner, dessert chef Ed Kaufman, recently opened Dolce Finale, a below-street-level restaurant that serves more than 20 Italian desserts. Tiramisu is sold at both locations.

Shannon speculates that some of the dish's current popularity can be explained by the fact that "it's not a weighty dessert." Although Petitto's has offered tiramisu on an occasional basis for the past three years, its recent surge in popularity has led Kaufman and Shannon to offer it regularly. Kaufman estimates that on an average Saturday he goes through 30 servings. There is even one customer who telephones prior to his arrival to make sure there will be enough tiramisu for his entire party.

Shannon points to the growing number of northern Italian restaurants as one possible explanation for the wave of interest in tiramisu: "Over the years, most Italian desserts came from southern Italy. As northern Italian cooking becomes more known, so will the desserts."

Jasper J. Mirabile, Jr., owns the 175-seat Jasper's and the newly opened 185-seat Trattoria Marco Polo that serve northern Italian cuisine in Kansas City, Missouri. Mirabile estimates that he sells 200 portions of tiramisu during an average week. "It outsells cheesecake, which used to be our biggest seller. Now for every cheesecake, I sell three tiramisu," he says.

Popular for carryout

The interest in tiramisu extends to carryout. "Our regular customers order it for takeout," Bullo says, "and we don't advertise, which says something about its popularity." The two Chianti restaurants serve 500 portions during an average week.

There doesn't seem to be a profile of the type of patron most likely to order tiramisu, although women may have the edge. "More women eat it,"

misu is not a Chinese general; it's an Italian dessert that came to the forefront in 1990.

TIRAMISU

Serves 8 to 10

Ingredients:
6 egg yolks
1¼ cups sugar
1¼ cups mascarpone cheese
1¾ cups whipping cream whipped to form soft peaks
1¾ cups cold espresso coffee
4 Tbs. brandy
48 ladyfingers
Powdered unsweetened chocolate, for topping

Method:
Cream yolks and sugar until smooth. Add mascarpone and mix on low speed 2 minutes. Fold in whipped cream and reserve.

Combine coffee and brandy in medium bowl. Dip 15 ladyfingers, one by one, into espresso mixture and arrange in single layer on 10-by-15-inch platter (or 10-by-15-inch baking sheet covered with foil), forming rectangle about 7 by 13 inches.

Cover with half the mascarpone/cream mixture. Repeat layers with 15 more ladyfingers dipped in espresso mixture and remaining mascarpone/cream mixture. Sift chocolate evenly over top. Halve remaining ladyfingers and arrange vertically around edge of cake, cut sides down. Refrigerate at least 4 hours. Cut into squares to serve.

—Courtesy of Chianti and Chianti Cucina

notes Paul LoDuca, chef of Carlucci, a 200-seat Italian restaurant in Chicago. "Men want something more chocolaty; women want something lighter. They think it's not as filling as a chocolaty dessert." Mirabile also notes that the women who dine at his restaurants ask for tiramisu because it is lighter.

While Shannon of Petitto's and Dolce Finale has not noticed a gender-related trend, she does remark, "I have four regular customers who are passionate about tiramisu, and they're all men. So this is a dessert that appeals to men, too."

To make or to buy?

Restaurant operators who wish to include the item on their menus have two options: they can purchase tiramisu readymade or prepare it in house.

One company that works through distributors to offer prepared tiramisu to the foodservice industry is the Cannoli Factory in Westbury, New York. Until recently, the Cannoli Factory's focus has been on unfilled cannoli shells, says president Mickey Zucaro, but now it has added tiramisu to its product line. Taste It Presents, Inc., a Manhattan company, introduced the dessert at this year's National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel/Motel Show. And samples of the confection were quickly snapped up.

The tiramisu comes frozen, "like a cheesecake; all the work's been done [for the restaurant operators]," Zucaro says. He cites uniformity and ease of preparation as benefits of purchasing prepared tiramisu. "This dessert is difficult and costly to make," Zucaro adds. "The main ingredient is mascarpone cheese from Italy, which is difficult to come by and very expensive."

Yet many restaurants choose to prepare their own tiramisu—despite the cost of the ingredients—because they take pride in the result. Carlos Fernandez, executive chef of Christini's Ristorante Italiano, a 230-seat restaurant in Orlando, Florida, admits that "as far as desserts go, tiramisu is one of our more expensive [because it is made with expensive ingredients and is labor intensive]."

"Tiramisu calls for real mascarpone cheese, espresso and ladyfingers—three very expensive ingredients," Mirabile explains. At Jasper's, the tiramisu is made 10 pans at a time, and each takes up to 30 minutes to prepare.

When Kaufman was developing his recipe for the restaurants, he experimented with an American version of mascarpone that was less expensive than the Italian product. But he found that it didn't hold up or have the same consistency.

Because much of tiramisu's appeal lies in its classic simplicity, restaurant operators who serve tiramisu urge their colleagues to respect the recipe. "It sounds like a simple recipe to prepare—take some mascarpone cheese, some coffee, some ladyfingers, some brandy—but it must be done correctly," says Bullo.

"We follow an old-time recipe exactly. We don't cheapen the dessert or cheat the recipe," Fernandez says.

Promoting tiramisu

Many restaurants like to promote tiramisu. Carlucci's has been cited in a number of area newspapers for its outstanding tiramisu. Instead of serving traditional cake on customer birthdays, the restaurant brings out a complimentary serving of tiramisu.

Bullo of the Chianti restaurants also believes that it's "important to train servers to explain the dessert so people will want to order it. People order it because it sounds so interesting."

Jasper's uses a more aggressive approach: "We have a table tent on the tables to explain tiramisu," says Mirabile. "And we have a square ad that reads, 'No, Tiramisu is not a Chinese general; it's a new Italian dessert.' " He also uses a flier to tell customers that a whole tiramisu can be purchased in the restaurant's deli.

At Dolce Finale, the clear dessert dishes of tiramisu are arranged in a lighted display case, and Shannon believes this presentation piques diners' interest: "It's more attractive in the individual dishes because people can see the various layers. It's a good product that looks really nice. I like to show it off." Although many of her customers learn of the dish through word-of-mouth recommendations, she instructs her servers to mention tiramisu first or second when reciting the dessert offerings to customers.

Is tiramisu here to stay?

Tiramisu is here today, but will it still be here tomorrow? Jasper's has served the dish for four years. "It's here to stay," Mirabile says firmly. "It's in all the major Italian cookbooks. People are getting to know about it."

"There's been no big Italian dessert since the cannoli," Carlucci's LoDuca points out. "So I think tiramisu will be around for a long time." ❑

Leslie Pietrzyk is a Washington DC writer.

State 1990 wrapup

Forty-four states held regular legislative sessions this year; and in every state, legislation that affected the restaurant industry was considered. The most common industry-related bills fell into three areas: the environment, benefits and taxes.

The environment

More than 1,700 bills were introduced this past session concerning solid waste. Integrated waste-management plans and recycling programs received the most attention at the state level. As state legislators are becoming more sophisticated about the nature of the solid-waste problem, the laws enacted are becoming more comprehensive.

For example, Delaware House Bill 585, which was signed into law in July 1990, established a hierarchy of preferred waste-management techniques and developed a statewide recycling strategy that will include collection and processing of recyclables and educational programs to teach the hows and whys of recycling. Also included is an important but usually neglected aspect of recycling programs: market research and development for recycled goods.

Other environmental proposals targeted packaging content. A model bill created by the Coalition of North Eastern Governors (CONEG) to phase heavy metals out of packaging was passed in several states beyond the Northeast. The "heavy metals," found in inks and dyes, become toxic when discarded into landfills. A group of laws passed this last session mandate coding of plastic containers according to resin content to facilitate recycling.

Solid waste is not the only environmental issue of note, however. Clean-air bills were introduced in most of the states, and water conservation and contamination are of growing concern. The complicated nature of these environmental problems will require long-term investments in research, public education and legislation.

Taxes

Many state legislatures found it increasingly difficult to balance constituent demands for more and better services with pleas against higher taxes. According to the National Governors' Association's *Fiscal Survey of States*, more than half of the states had to take budget-balancing measures during the year to eliminate shortfalls that developed after their initial budgets were passed. States seeking revenue to offset these deficits often turned to taxes.

Taxes affecting the restaurant industry took a variety of forms. In New York, a beverage-container tax of 2 cents per nonrefillable container was enacted. This is the first statewide measure of its kind signed into law. In Nebraska, a gross-receipts tax was charged to businesses in order to fund local recycling and waste-reduction programs. The tax itself is small, but it represents an alternative method of raising revenues for new programs that states are beginning to initiate. In Florida, a very controversial alcohol tax—to be charged by the drink—was enacted. Restaurateurs are organizing an effort to repeal this unwieldy tax. In Vermont, a bill increased the meal tax from 6 percent to 7 percent. Although the tax is termed "temporary," economic conditions in the state convinced legislators it was necessary. Foodservice operators were pleased, however, with a $600,000 increase in the state's travel and tourism budget.

Employee benefits

Rising concern over the nation's working uninsured prompted several states to examine mandated-health-benefits options. The burden of regulating health care traditionally falls to the states, because of the regional nature of costs and service availability. Tough economic times are requiring states to find creative ways to provide necessary services that are affordable. In California, Connecticut and Illinois programs to pare down mandates and reform insurance-underwriting practices were considered to encourage small businesses to provide health-care coverage as a benefit. In Massachusetts, the Universal Health Care Law will require private businesses to pay for insurance for all employees or pay substantial penalties. In order to minimize the damage done to businesses by mandated benefits, many states are passing mandate-evaluation laws, which require an economic impact study before any new mandates can be enacted.

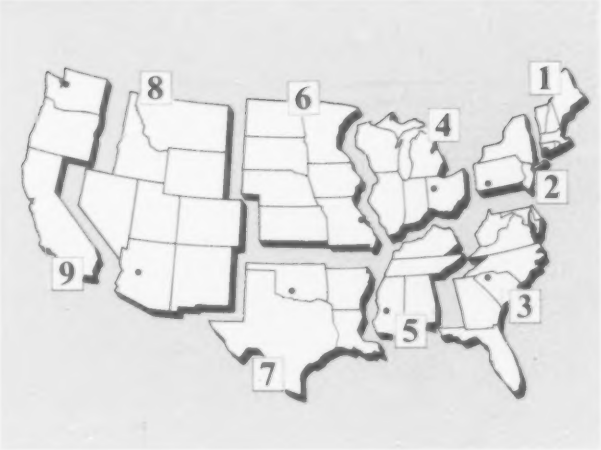
An outcry from the business community against the high cost of workers'-compensation-insurance premiums, escalating abuses and increased costly litigation forced state legislatures to negotiate reforms in 1990. Several states, including California, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and West Virginia, passed laws establishing some type of dispute-settlement system to reduce lawsuits. A ballot initiative in Louisiana reinstated the hearing-officer process, despite an earlier court decision overturning the reform law. In Colorado, Florida, New Hampshire and Oregon, employers are no longer forced to pay benefits to workers who were under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of an accident. Other reforms include premium caps, regulated medical costs and liability pooling.

The District of Columbia and New Jersey passed new mandated parental-leave laws. The District's law is unique in that it offers the broadest definition of "family member" allowed in any state: "a person to whom the employee is related by blood, legal custody or marriage; a child who lives with an employee and for whom the employee permanently assumes and discharges parental responsibility; or a person with whom the employee shares or has shared, within the last year, a mutual residence and with whom the employee maintains a committed relationship."

New Jersey's law is especially notable because it requires businesses with 100 or more employees throughout the United States to provide parental-leave benefits to their New Jersey employees.

—Linda Way

As they close out their 1990 books, many operators are bracing for a 1991 that may bring the dual challenges of a slowing economy and increased competition, especially in urban areas.



1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: Huntington, CT
Association member: Howard Curtis
Operation: Connolly's Restaurant and Taproom
Profile: Upscale restaurant and bar room
In business: 10 years
Seats: 140, plus 100 in bar
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Business is getting better now that we're into the dining season," says manager **Michael Musante,** pointing out that summer was a slow time, aggravated by New England's sluggish economy.

Promotions have helped pick up traffic for this upscale, but casual, restaurant that is known for its steaks and seafood. October was highlighted by a big Oktoberfest promotion.

Connolly's does a booming bar business on Monday evenings with a football-game promotion in the taproom. Happy hour is a taproom event every weekday, and free food is offered at the bar. Especially popular in recent weeks has been a Sunday brunch buffet featuring 125 breakfast and lunch choices.

2 MID-ATLANTIC

Location: Uniontown, PA
Association members: Henry and Helen Becker
Operation: Beckers' Shady Side
Profile: Upscale restaurant and banquet facility
In business: 3 years
Seats: 95, plus 500 in banquet room
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Three years ago, the Becker family bought the former Shady Side Inn and gave it a new name to reflect the fact that six Beckers have a hand in the operation. "Business has been great," says matriarchal co-owner **Helen Becker.** Sales last year approached $1 million in a town with only about 20,000 residents.

Chef Randy Becker serves up an extensive upscale menu that is long on seafood favorites, including salmon, swordfish, grouper and roughy. "We move more roughy than anything else," he says.

Uniontown is the county seat of Fayette County and, consequently, is home to a large number of lawyers, many of whom frequent Beckers' Shady Side. The restaurant also draws customers from neighboring towns and even Pittsburgh, some 50 miles north.

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Spartanburg, SC
Association member: John Kirby
Operation: McDowell's Drive-in
Profile: Diner and carryout restaurant
In business: 39 years
Seats: 40
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Although the business climate has softened in recent months, business has remained steady at McDowell's. "If we got any more business, we couldn't handle it," says new owner **John Kirby,** who bought McDowell's earlier this year after working there for 20 years.

McDowell's is located in a Spartanburg business district and attracts a large lunch crowd, by featuring short-order specialties, including hamburger, steak, chicken and hot dogs. It offers no drive-in service despite the moniker. "Two of my vendors say that we're one of the only businesses here still doing well," says Kirby.

Of the 12 employees at McDowell's, seven are members of Kirby's family, including two sons, a daughter-in-law, a brother and a sister. "If my mother could walk, I'd have her up here, too," says Kirby of his "in-house" recruiting method.

4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Lima, OH
Association member: Kathleen Moore
Operation: Lickity Split Restaurant
Profile: Ice cream shop and restaurant
In business: 10 years
Seats: 50
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

The Lickity Split Restaurant continues to expand in response to strong customer demand, explains co-owner **Kathleen Moore.** What began as an ice cream shop 10 years ago has grown into a three-meal-a-day restaurant, attracting senior citizens and families in this manufacturing town of 48,000.

"During our peak time, we have people waiting for a table," says Moore, "and sometimes we lose customers because they don't want to wait." Hence the plan to add dining space to what is now a 50-seat restaurant. As now configured, the restaurant building retains some of the architectural traits of its previous tenant, a gas station.

Breakfast is a busy time at the Lickity Split, which offers a menu of standard breakfast items and omelets. In general, business is best during summer months when people are more likely to venture out.

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Jackson, MS
Association member: James Zouboukos
Operation: The Elite Restaurant
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 43 years
Seats: 172
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

The Elite has been a Jackson dining landmark for 43 years. "Ask anyone in Jackson about the Elite," says co-owner **James Zouboukos,** "and they'll say, 'They have great rolls.' " Homemade rolls are baked twice a day, filling the dining room with a fresh-baked, warm aroma and complementing Elite's Southern menu dishes, including chicken-fried steak and chicken-and-dumplings. The extensive upscale menu goes beyond Southern cuisine, however, to include fresh seafood, steaks and enchiladas.

The biggest threat to the Elite's dining tradition occurred in 1974, when the restaurant's building burned down. Rebuilt in a French style later that year, the restaurant stands out from the shiny new bank and office buildings that surround it. "The last four or five years have been the best ever for business," says Zouboukos.

Zouboukos and his brother, who are originally from Greece, opened the Elite just after World War II. "My brother is 81 years old, and I'm 74," says Zouboukos, "and we go to work every day."

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: St. Louis, MO
Association member: Norman Sewing
Operation: Salad Bowl Cafeteria
Profile: Cafeteria, banquets and catering
In business: 43 years
Seats: 250
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

The Salad Bowl Cafeteria is prepared to weather any economic downturn that may hit St. Louis, says **Norman Sewing,** one of three brothers who run this family-owned business. "In the 1982 downturn, we did pretty well," says Sewing. In fact, he thinks it's possible that customer counts could rise a bit as patrons are attracted to the value the cafeteria offers. "A lot of upscale restaurants around here are hurting," he adds.

The banquet and catering business have grown to about 50 percent of the Salad Bowl's sales, and a full slate of customers is currently lined up.

"You've got to make yourself unique," philosophizes Sewing about the secret to success in the restaurant business. One signature of the Salad Bowl is its made-from-scratch pies. To churn out homemade baked goods, the Salad Bowl staff includes five bakers.

Does the Salad Bowl have competition? "You better believe it," says Sewing, who adds that a newly opened shopping center in the neighborhood has about six restaurants.

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Lawton, OK
Association member: Steve Weyher
Operation: Martin's Restaurant
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 42 years
Seats: 85 in dining rooms, 48 in lounge and 150 in private party rooms
Meals served: Dinner, banquets, parties

The Christmas season is a good time of year for business at Martin's. "That's when we earn the money to pay our taxes," jokes owner **Steve Weyher.** Christmas parties and banquets are both Martin's specialties, and Weyher offers party packages based on anything from hot dogs to escargots. Other offerings include theme parties based on the foods and decorations of Germany, France, Mexico or Italy.

The main dining rooms at Martin's feature a variety of upscale menu items, including veal Oscar, steaks, lobster, crab legs and pork chops. "We stay busy," says Weyher, "but not packed."

A big chunk of the Lawton-area economy was taken away recently when 5,000 to 7,000 troops were airlifted to Saudi Arabia from the Fort Sill Military Reservation.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Prescott, AZ
Association member: Paul Murphy
Operation: Murphy's Restaurant
Profile: Upscale restaurant and bar
In business: 5½ years
Seats: 168, plus 72 in bar
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Business is great," says owner **Paul Murphy.** "We're up 12 percent over last year, and last year was a very good year."

Murphy's grossed more than $2 million last year in a town of just 28,000 people by attracting a sophisticated local trade and a solid out-of-town base. "It's not unusual for our customers to drive 100 miles for dinner," says Murphy.

Although Prescott is a mile high in elevation and is a forested area, a Murphy's menu highlight is the fresh fish that is flown in regularly. Another specialty is the restaurant's proprietary beer, brewed nearby and carrying a Murphy's label.

Owner Murphy keeps the place packed by offering customers a full calendar of special events and promotions. "The key to our success is that we always keep something going on," says Murphy.

Murphy is a stickler for proper training of employees, and he makes his own training films on site. "They are very important to our success," says Murphy.

9 PACIFIC

Location: Seattle, WA
Association member: Rebecca Pulido
Operation: El Puerco Lloran
Profile: Mexican restaurant
In business: 8½ years
Seats: 65
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

The simple formula at El Puerco Lloran continues to spell success for this small Seattle restaurant. Located at the waterfront, near the city's aquarium, the restaurant features a limited menu of less than 10 items. Corn tortillas are made on site to complement the popular tacos, carne asada and chiles rellenos.

An open kitchen provides patrons with some visual theater, and El Puerco Lloran is known locally as a good place to fill up at a budget price. "It's real cheap," says manager **Rebecca Pulido,** since most menu items are priced between $3.75 and $4.75. A modest price hike may be in the works, however, because of rising food and labor costs.

Winter months bring a slight decrease in the number of tourist customers, but local traffic remains strong, in part due to reviews the restaurant receives in local newspapers and magazines.

—Paul Moomaw

The pizza barometer

Forget press conferences, sound bites and state-of-the-union addresses. To get the scoop on what's *really* brewing in the nation's capital, call Domino's Pizza.

According to Domino's, there is a definite surge in pizza deliveries to government hot spots--including the Pentagon, the CIA and the White House—in the dark hours before a political storm. Orders increased before the Panama invasion, the Grenada invasion and the American air strike on Libya. The night before President Bush sent troops to the Middle East was a near-record pizza night. And the pizza chain made quite a few dollars from the U.S. Congress during recent budget negotiations.

Pizza orders are not confined to U.S. events, however. Deliveries are always up at the British Embassy whenever the royals are awaiting a birth.

—Jericho Promotions, Inc.

Flashy trash

If trash troubles give you the blues, a new kind of trash bag may soon offer a colorful solution, turning your garbage woes into wows.

An inventor in Louisiana has developed a bright alternative to dull gray and green trash bags—decorative garbage bags that can be made in an unlimited array of colors and patterns. In addition, the bags release air-freshening fragrances to cover the usual noxious trash-can odor. The bags are biodegradable—so as you enhance your restaurant's environment, you can enhance the earth's as well.

Because the design for these bags is now being presented to interested manufacturers for licensing,

it may not be long before the gray-green clouds of trash bags become rainbows.

—Invention Subcommission Corporation

Fax your facts

There's a new restaurant guide in New York City, and it isn't available in any book—it's in a fax machine.

MenuFax, a restaurant marketing firm based in Rutherford, New Jersey, has unveiled its fax service for customers hungry for restaurant information.

Activated through touch-tone telephone or fax-machine signals, the Menufax system connects customers with a restaurant directory tailored to their particular price, neighborhood and cuisine preferences. The toll-free number can be reached from any touch-tone phone or fax machine 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Callers receive a preliminary restaurant directory seconds after entering their fax number; more detailed menu information from particular restaurants can be accessed by entering the restaurant's individual four-digit code.

For customers, all it takes is a phone call, but restaurateurs must be subscribers in order to transmit information. There is no charge to be included in the basic directory; but to have specific menu information loaded into the system and be assigned an access code, restaurants must purchase a $100 graphics package that includes loading into the system menus, logos and any other information a restaurant chooses. In addition, there is a per-fax-page charge of $1.50. Although there is no monthly membership fee at present, MenuFax does anticipate inaugurating a small fee beginning in April 1991. For more information, call 1-800-545-MENU.

—MenuFax

A dedicated distributor

Searching for a bold burgundy to accompany your bourguignon or a chic chardonnay to complement your chicken? Paterno Imports is ready to help.

Paterno, the nation's leading distributor of premium wines, has launched a new advertising campaign that includes a wine-list-analysis program. Ads encourage restaurateurs to call a toll-free number (1-800-395-LIST) to receive a free analysis as well as wine-list tips that lead to menu matches that work. Paterno will also print and provide wine lists for restaurants free of charge and will conduct a training program for servers on the proper presentation and serving of wine.

—Paterno Imports

Recycling the house

McDonald's Corporation recently took its environmental campaign one step further to include the restaurant structure.

Through its "McRecycle USA" program, the company hopes to invest more than $100 million into recycled products for use in the construction and renovation of its restaurants, including such reusable resources as insulation, wall board, tabletops, trashcans and roofing.

The program was developed to encourage markets for these types of materials. Since McDonald's builds nearly 400 new restaurants each year and remodels about 1,000 others to the tune of almost $400 million, that amount alone could stimulate quite a market.

—*New York Times*

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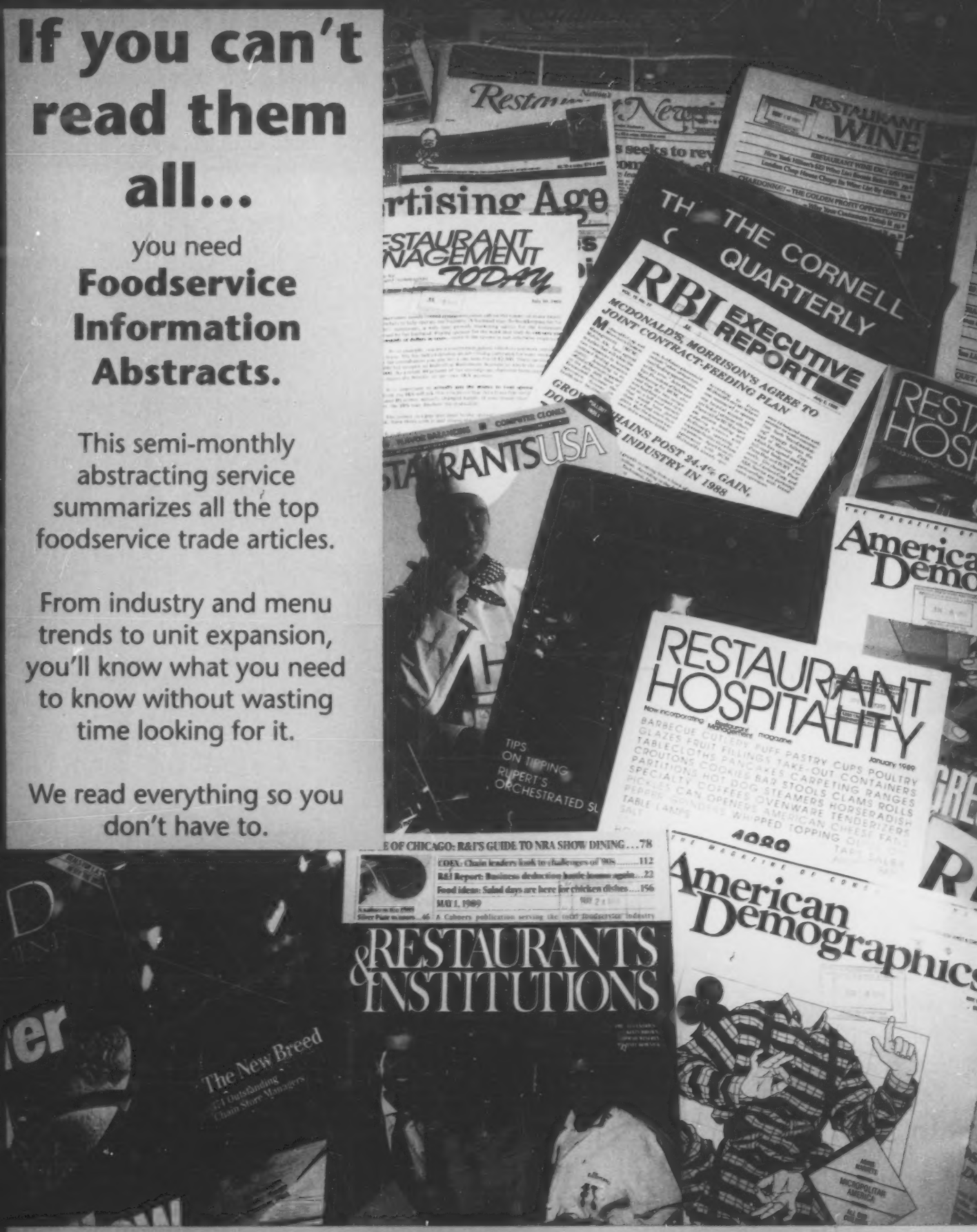

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THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

VOL. 11 □ NO. 1 □ JANUARY 1991

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ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

SEMINARS

In addressing the changing and specific training needs of foodservice operations, The Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association is expanding its in-house seminar programs to offer organizations more options for cost-effective training. The in-house programs can be customized, allowing operations to pinpoint their specific training needs and then receive that training within their own facilities.

In redirecting its seminar programs, the foundation will no longer offer national seminars, with the exception of a few special programs throughout the year (including the National Restaurant Association Show in May). The concentration on in-house programs allows the foundation to continue offering its former national seminar topics as in-house programs, while creating new workshops that focus on individual training needs.

More personalized training is vital to achieving the foundation's goal of upgrading the job of the professional foodservice manager. Over the next few months, the foundation will be working with operations, state associations and trade groups to set up in-house programs.

For more information on setting up in-house programs, contact the educational foundation's instructional services department at 1-800-765-2122.

For information, contact:
Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association
250 South Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60606
(312) 715-1010 or 1-800-765-2122

If your company is interested in our in-house programs, call or write to the attention of Jeff Harrison at the above address.

Note: *All Chicago seminars are held in the educational foundation's conference center at 250 South Wacker Drive.*

EXECUTIVE STUDY GROUP SERIES

International Development Executives
1/9–11 Dallas, TX

Safety Officers
1/23–25 Miami, FL

Large Independent Operators
2/12–15 St. Thomas, VI

Human Resources (formerly Labor Relations)
2/28–3/1 San Diego, CA

Internal Audit
3/19–22 San Diego, CA

Tax Executives
4/2–5 Coronado, CA

Financial Officers
4/3–5 Coronado, CA

Management Information Systems
4/16–19 Santa Fe, NM

Quality Assurance
4/24–26 Monterey, CA

Environmental Affairs Officers
4/3–5 Boston, MA

Marketing Executives
5/15–18 Chicago, IL

MAECO
5/15–17 Chicago, IL

Foodservice Purchasing Managers
5/16–17 Chicago, IL

For more information on specific study groups, contact: Philip Kralovec, (312) 853-2525.

The Executive Study Groups present semi-annual professional development programs for executives who would like to meet with their industry peers to share ideas and concerns. Executives in each of the aforementioned disciplines from member foodservice companies are welcome and encouraged to participate.

Note: *A new study group focusing on international development is currently forming. Any persons interested in participating in this group are encouraged to contact Philip Kralovec.*

COURSES AND BOOKS AVAILABLE

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Applied Foodservice Sanitation
Applied Foodservice Purchasing
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Management by Menu
The Financial Ingredient in Foodservice Management
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Foodservice Supervision: Achieving Success through People
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Susan Mills
Paul Moomaw
Anne Papa Curtis
B. Hudson Riehle
Denise Roach
Linda Way
Diane Welland
Art Direction
Magazine: Tom Bellucci
Covers: Richard Earle, Liz Dalgetty
Administrative Assistant Susan Kessler
Editorial Secretary Ronda Bowers
Word Processing Operator Agnes Harkins
Intern Zari Malsawma

Editorial office and association headquarters 1200 Seventeenth St., N.W. Washington DC 20036-3097 (202) 331-5900
Chicago office 150 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2000 Chicago, IL 60601 (312) 853-2525

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Michael E. Hurst, owner
15th Street Fisheries, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Meetings held with new members of Congress

Important issues in 1991

National Restaurant Association lobbyists have been busy meeting with newly elected members of Congress and have begun familiarizing them with the foodservice industry's stance on key legislative issues. The 102nd Congress convenes this month.

Several unresolved issues relevant to our industry will be considered again in 1991, including parental leave and civil-rights legislation. Last session, Congress passed bills dealing with both issues, but they were vetoed by the President. We will again press for repeal of employer-paid FICA taxes on tips and reinstatement of the small-business exemption to the minimum-wage law. Through our grassroots lobbying efforts, we have already garnered considerable support on these issues, and we will continue to seek further support during the upcoming session.

Other issues likely to be debated in the next session include mandatory food labeling, attempts to lower the blood-alcohol-content level connected with drunk driving, new tip-reporting requirements and increased restrictions on teen labor.

Speakers chosen for ADA symposium

Representatives from the Department of Justice and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) will speak at the association's national symposium, "The Americans with Disabilities Act: Answers for the Foodservice Operator," on March 7, 1991, in Washington DC. The Department of Justice is responsible for the public-accommodation regulations, and the EEOC is responsible for the employment regulations—two areas that will greatly affect our industry.

At the symposium, a panel composed of several foodservice operators will ask questions of the speakers and provide feedback on the proposed regulations. Attendance at the symposium will be limited to 300 persons, so register early. The registration fee is $125. For more information, contact the government affairs department at (202) 331-5900.

PAC insert in this issue

Enclosed in this month's magazine is an insert from the NRA-PAC. The insert includes an authorization card that will allow the association to contact you about our program to support candidates who share our industry's concerns on important legislative issues. Now more than ever, the industry needs your support, so please sign and return the card soon to be included in our PAC efforts. For more information, contact the political affairs department at (202) 331-5900.

Gearing up for International Food Media Conference

The communications department is preparing for the International Food Media Conference to be held February 14, 1991, in Dallas. At the conference, I will be speaking about the state of the foodservice industry, and we will provide the editors with material for stories on the effect of the economy on the industry, successful at-

Foodservice—first in number of units

Commercial Foodservice	483,000
Institutional Foodservice	173,000
Military Foodservice	1,000

Foodservice sales have risen dramatically since 1970

Year	Sales(billion $)
1970	$ 42.8
1975	70.3
1980	119.6
1988	211.8
1991	248.1

We're glad you're here!

For further information, contact:
National Restaurant Association
1200 17th St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 331-5900

National Restaurant Association

1990 – 1991 Foodservice Industry Pocket Factbook

1991 Sales	$248.1 Billion
Units	657,000
Employees	8+ Million
Foodservice Share of the Food Dollar	43%

Foodservice Sales Projection, 1991: $248.1 billion

	Sales '91 (billion $)
Commercial Foodservice	
Eating Places	$162.6
Drinking Places	8.7
Foodservice Contractors	15.3
Hotel/Motel Restaurants	15.7
Other: Retail, Vending, Recreation	17.2
	$219.5
Institutional Foodservice	
Businesses, schools, hospitals, nursing homes and others which operate their own foodservice	$ 27.6
Military Foodservice	
Base exchange, officers' and NCO club foodservice	$ 1.0
Projected 1991 Sales Total	**$248.1**

Foodservice—an integral part of our nation's economy

- Foodservice industry sales will rise 5.2% in 1991 and equal nearly 5% of the U.S. GNP.
- One out of four retail outlets is an eating or drinking establishment.
- Eating and drinking places are first among all retailers in the number of establishments and number of employees.
- Total annual wages and benefits equal $25 billion for restaurants and lunchrooms, and $20 billion for fast food establishments.

Foodservice is a ladder to management opportunity

- Seven out of 10 supervisors in food preparation and service occupations are women.
- More than 500,000 people will be employed in managerial and administrative occupations at eating and drinking places by 2000.
- In 1989, 12% of the 356,000 food preparation and service supervisors were black and 9% Hispanic.

The National Restaurant Association's on-going consumer research reveals

- Almost 50% of all consumers visit a restaurant on their birthdays, making birthdays the most popular restaurant holiday. Mother's Day and Father's Day are second and third.
- Fridays are the most prevalent day to eat out, followed by Saturdays and Thursdays.
- Chinese, Italian and Mexican are the most popular ethnic foods in restaurants. At least three out of four adults have eaten these foods in the past.
- The average household spent $620 per person per year on food away from home.
- 39% of consumers report choosing nutritious items when ordering in restaurants in 1989, up from 35% in 1986.
- Off-premise restaurant traffic grew by more than 12% between 1986 and 1989, while on-premise traffic remained stable.
- Takeout and delivery from restaurants is most popular among singles, households with children, and people under age 30.

The typical employee in a food service occupation is:

- a female (60%)
- under 30 years of age (58%)
- a high school graduate (62%)
- unmarried (63%)
- living in a household with relatives (81%)
- a part-time employee working an average of 26 hours per week

Eating and drinking places are mostly small businesses.

- Nearly three out of four (72%) had annual sales of less than $500,000 in 1987.
- Three out of four are single-unit operations.
- One out of three are sole proprietorships.
- There are more proprietorships and partnerships among eating and drinking places than in any other retail trade.

Chains and franchises continue to grow in importance

- Franchise restaurants should number 102,135 units in 1990—up 13% from 1988.
- Sales at franchise restaurants reached $64.3 billion in 1988, accounting for 46% of eating place sales.
- There were 6,996 franchise restaurants located outside the United States in 1988, 77% more than in 1980.
- More than one out of four (26%) international franchise restaurant units were located in Japan. An additional 19% were located in Canada.
- Franchise restaurants had unit sales of $711,500 in 1988, substantially higher than the $526,038 average for all types of franchises.
- Hamburger (including roast beef, frankfurter and other related themes) franchises accounted for 2 out of 5 franchise restaurant units in 1988.

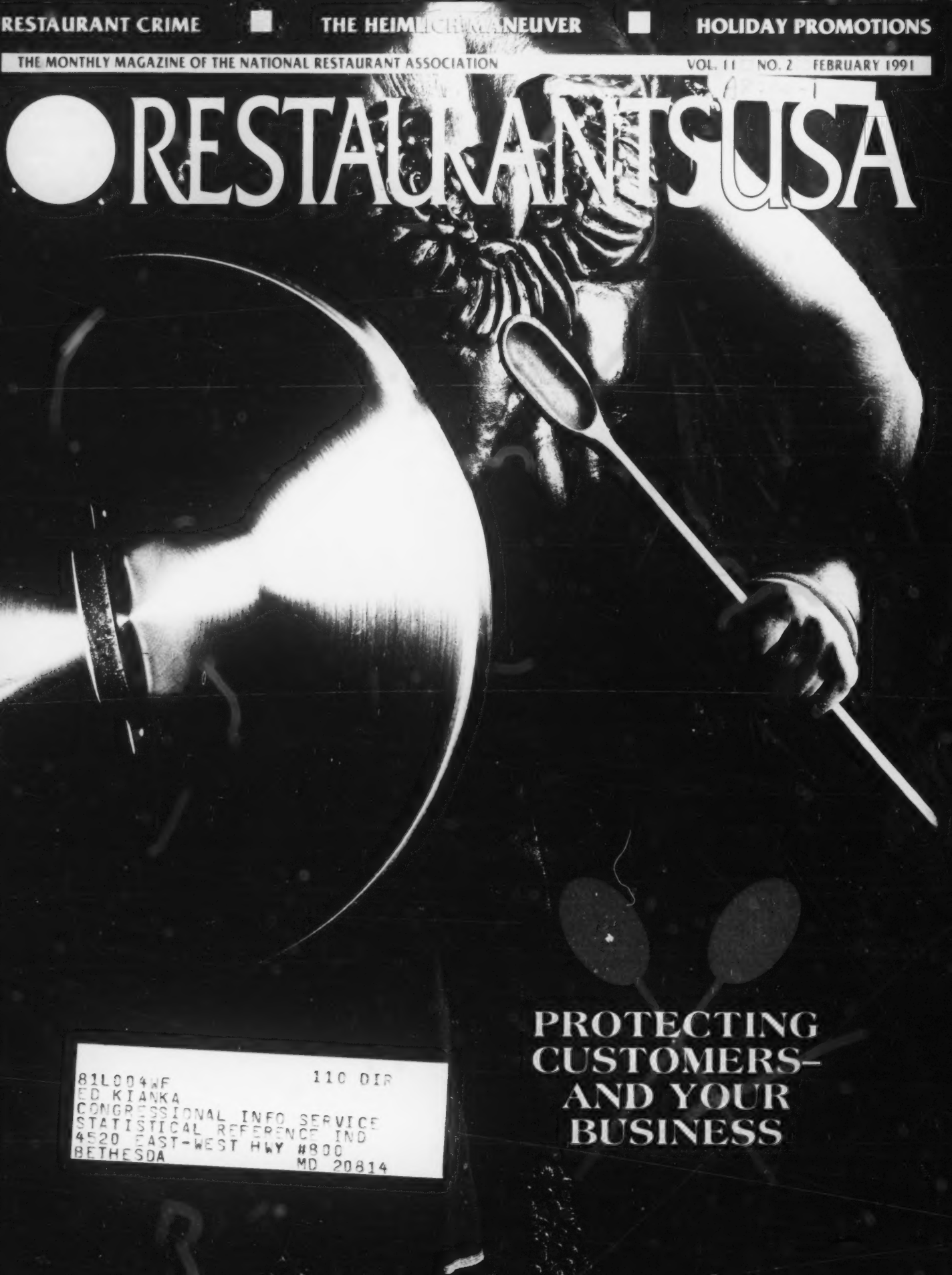
Foodservice—first in daily customer contact

- The likelihood of patronizing foodservice decreases with age. 68% of 18 to 24-year-olds are restaurant patrons on a typical day, compared with 34% of adults over 65.
- Men are slightly more likely to eat out than women. 57% of men eat out on a typical day compared with 47% of women.
- Per person check averaged $3.79 in 1989.
- Thirty percent of adults are foodservice patrons at lunch, 24% are patrons at dinner and 7% are patrons at breakfast.
- On a typical day, 37% of adults eat on-premise, while 21% purchase food for off-premise consumption.
- Men are more likely than women to patronize restaurants for lunch.
- Seven out of 10 adults eat at a casual restaurant at least once a month, with 29% visiting a casual restaurant at least once a week.

RESTAURANT CRIME ■ THE HEIMLICH MANEUVER ■ HOLIDAY PROMOTIONS

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION VOL. 11 NO. 2 FEBRUARY 1991

RESTAURANTS USA



PROTECTING CUSTOMERS– AND YOUR BUSINESS

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CONGRESSIONAL INFO SERVICE
STATISTICAL REFERENCE IND
4520 EAST-WEST HWY #800
BETHESDA MD 20814

ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

SEMINARS

Seminars scheduled during the National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel/Motel Show

Saturday, 5/18

Full-day seminars
Banquet Management
Dining Room Management
Food Cost Management
Profitability
NEW! SERVSAFE/Serving Alcohol Safely

Half-day seminars
Kitchen Management
NEW! Legal Issues for Foodservice Operators
Promoting Your Restaurant
NEW! Service that Sells
The Labor Issue
NEW! Train-the-Trainer

Sunday, 5/19

Full-day seminars
Food Cost Management
Kitchen Management
Profitability
SERVSAFE/AFS Train-the-Trainer
Successful Buffet Management

Half-day seminars
Dining Room Management
Promoting Your Restaurant
Service that Sells
NEW! Stress Management
Theft Control

Two-day seminar (5/18–5/19)
SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation

For more information on pre-show seminars, contact the Educational Foundation at (800) 765-2122.

EXECUTIVE STUDY GROUP SERIES

Large Independent Operators
2/12–15 St. Thomas, VI

Human Resources (formerly Labor Relations)
2/28–3/1 San Diego, CA

Internal Audit
3/19–22 San Diego, CA

Tax Executives
4/2–5 Coronado, CA

Financial Officers
4/3–5 Coronado, CA

Management Information Systems
4/16–19 Santa Fe, NM

Quality Assurance
4/24–26 Monterey, CA

Environmental Affairs Officers
4/3–5 Boston, MA

Marketing Executives
5/15–18 Chicago, IL

MAECO
5/15–17 Chicago, IL

Foodservice Purchasing Managers
5/16–17 Chicago, IL

For more information on specific study groups, contact: Philip Kralovec, (312) 853-2525.

The Executive Study Groups present semi-annual professional development programs for executives who would like to meet with their industry peers to share ideas and concerns. Executives in each of the aforementioned disciplines from member foodservice companies are welcome and encouraged to participate.

Note: *A new study group focusing on international development is currently forming. Any persons interested in participating in this group are encouraged to contact Philip Kralovec.*

COURSES AND BOOKS AVAILABLE

Certification Courses
Applied Foodservice Sanitation
Applied Foodservice Purchasing
Managing Quantity Food Production
Management by Menu
The Financial Ingredient in Foodservice Management
Foodservice: A Managerial Approach
Legal Aspects of Foodservice Management
Foodservice Supervision: Achieving Success through People
Effective Foodservice Marketing
Introduction to the Foodservice Industry/ Introduction to Foodservice Management
NEW! Principles of Professional Cooking
NEW! Managing Foodservice Facilities and Equipment
NEW! Nutrition for the Foodservice Manager
NEW! Foodservice Management Accounting

Self-Development Courses
Protecting Restaurant Profits: Managing Security
Effective Communication
Managing People
Restaurant Operations and Control
Restaurant Purchasing
Bar and Beverage Management
Helping People Grow
Service: Managing the Guest Experience

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RESTAURANTS USA

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Senior Director Jeffrey R. Prince
Editor Sylvia Rivchun-Somerville
Acting Editor Paul Moomaw
Managing Editor Melanie A. Crosby
Staff Contributors
Jennifer Batty, Elizabeth Gordon, Robert E. Harrington, Larry Himelfarb, Philip Kralovec, Andrew McLauchlin, Nancy Michalski, Susan Mills, Anne Papa Curtis, B. Hudson Riehle, Denise Roach, Linda Way, Diane Welland
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Michael E. Hurst, owner
15th Street Fisheries, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Issues re-emerge on Capitol Hill

At its January meeting, the association's board positioned the industry in regard to several political challenges. In response to forthcoming proposals to stiffen penalties for violations of federal teen-labor laws, the board voted to seek review and amendment of those laws, some of which are 50 years old. In particular, we would like to see requirements concerning the hours and times that minors can work—and what equipment they can use—made more appropriate to contemporary conditions.

In preparation for the next round of the minimum-wage debate, the board decided to support further expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), the federal tax program that provides relief for low-income workers with families. The association believes that EITC is a far better way of aiding the working poor than are hikes in the minimum wage.

Several issues of importance to our industry from the last session of Congress have been reintroduced in the present session. Parental leave and civil-rights bills both have re-emerged, and the association is busy making our industry's stance clear to policymakers.

Other issues the association will pursue include repealing the employer-paid FICA tax on tips and reinstating the small-business exemption to the minimum-wage law.

In addition, the association is heading a coalition of business groups that will seek to have Congress reexamine elements of the 1985 law known as COBRA. COBRA allows former employees to remain on an employer's group-health plan for a certain amount of time after the employer has left the business. Since the law passed, Congress has broadened the scope of the law, with detrimental effects to some operators. The coalition hopes to persuade Congress to review COBRA restrictions already in effect and to prevent the addition of any further requirements.

Operations questionnaire mailed

Key members should be watching for the 1991 Restaurant Industry Operations questionnaire that was mailed last month. This year the study is being carried out in cooperation with the accounting firm Deloitte & Touche. Remember to complete and return the questionnaire this month. All participants will receive a complimentary copy of the valuable final report when it is published later this year.

Food Media Conference

As this issue of ***Restaurants USA*** went to press, we were preparing a presentation to be made to approximately 200 food writers and editors attending the International Food Media Conference in Dallas on February 14. Some of the topics covered include a report on the

casualization trend in upscale restaurants, the introduction to nutritional products in fast food restaurants, training tactics for better service and menu offerings for children. All of the reports were based on surveys conducted during the previous year.

Based on last year's experience, we can anticipate that writers and editors attending the event will produce some 600 articles drawing on information received at the conference. These articles will help highlight the foodservice industry and the steps operators are taking to fulfill consumer needs.

Gearing up for the Monterey Wine Festival

The 15th annual Monterey Wine Festival is just weeks away. The festival, to be held March 17–19 in Monterey, California, promises to be an exciting event for all those who attend. Along with evening wine tastings, there will be an opening night reception held at the Monterey Bay Aquarium, a series of educational programs, and luncheons at some of Monterey's finest restaurants.

Just before the festival begins, the chairman and secretary of the British Court of Master Sommeliers will conduct the Advanced Sommelier Certificate Course and the Master Sommelier Diploma Examination in Monterey. The courses will be held March 12–15, and the exam will be given March 16–18.

The registration fee for the festival is $365. For more information or to register, contact the association's Chicago office at (800) 525-FEST.

Last call for menus

Most of the entries for the Great Menu Contest should already have been sent, but you still have a chance to submit your potential award-winning menu if you hurry. The last day for entries is February 28, 1991. For more information about the contest call the association at (202) 331-5942.

Product catalog available

The educational foundation has a new listing of products developed for foodservice managers. The catalog, entitled *Excell*, features items such as SERVSAFE training manuals, employee manuals, instructor's kits and manager's kits. To order the catalog, contact the educational foundation at (800) 765-2122.

In January, 47 new members joined the association. We welcome you and look forward to developing a stronger industry network with your participation.

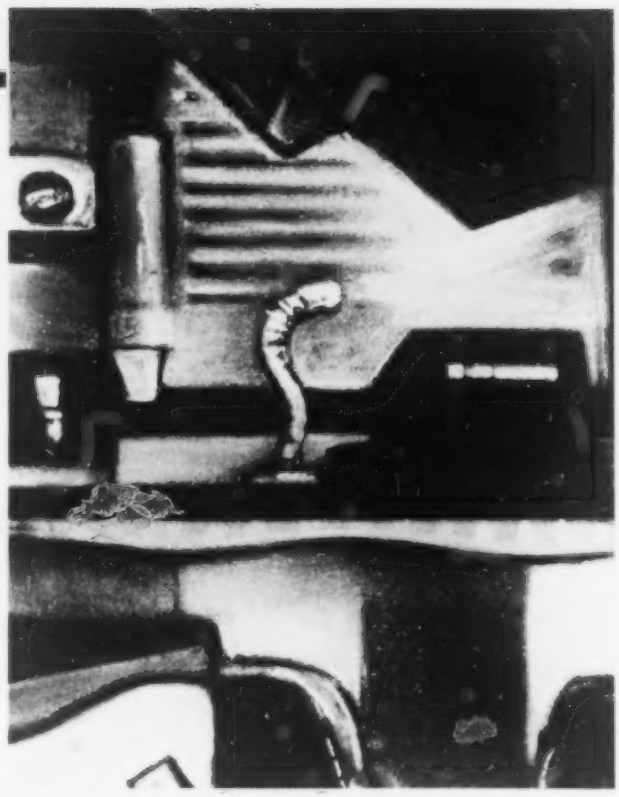
Sincerely,

Michael E. Hurst

Michael E. Hurst
President and Chairman of the Board

PROTECTING CUSTOMERS—AND YOUR BUSINESS

New standards of care are emerging in the restaurant industry. Operators are expected to go to great lengths to protect those they serve. How far do customers—and the law—expect you to go?



SPECIALS

12 Crimes against customers: Could you be held responsible?
Will superhero crime fighter be the next role an operator must play? Traditional ideas about legal liability are changing.

14 Negligent hiring
The wrongdoings of your employees could put you in jeopardy under a new legal idea known as "negligent hiring." Here are some suggestions for avoiding the problem.

17 The Heimlich Maneuver: Part of a new standard of service?
Does caring for customers mean saving their lives? The Heimlich Maneuver could keep your customers from choking to death.

HEIMLICH MANEUVER

Index
Pull out and save the index of articles that appeared in ***Restaurants USA*** in 1990. The index is a handy reference for retrieving information from past issues.

20 Restaurants head back home
Customers are searching for the comfortable, familiar foods of home, and restaurants are giving them just what they crave.

22 A sommelier with an ear for wine
An interview with Madeline Triffon, a master sommelier who knows how to talk with—and listen to—her customers.

24 Successful holiday promotions
Many operations have spiced up business with some unusual holiday promotions.

DEPARTMENTS

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- ☐ Expanded group insurance plans
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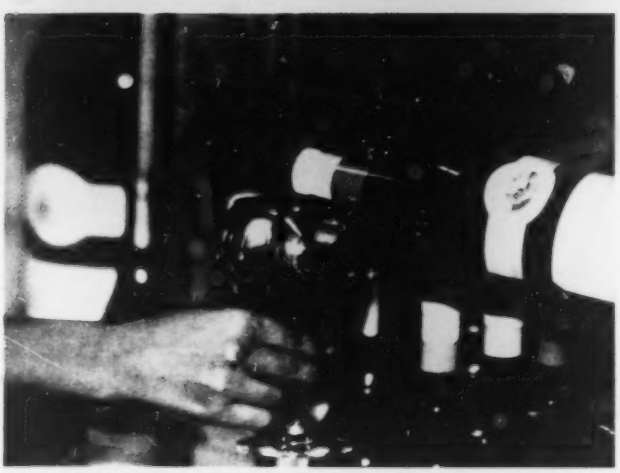
Cover photo by Gary Landsman. Foodservice equipment courtesy of E. B. Adams Company.

Vintage '91



The popular Monterey Wine Festival takes place March 17-19 in Monterey, California. Wine tastings and educational sessions give attendees a chance to learn about, compare and select wines. For more information, call (800) 525-FEST.

Clark book available

"Don't worry about the competition" was part of the written creed followed by long-time Seattle restaurateur Walter F. Clark. Clark felt that time spent fretting over the competition could be better spent attending to details in one's own establishment. For those interested in the philosophy and life of Walter Clark, a biography entitled *Mr. Restaurant* is now available.

Clark successfully opened and operated dozens of restaurants over his 55-year career and served as president of the National Restaurant Association in 1946–47. Always a civic leader in Seattle, Clark also contributed to the nation's war effort as expert food consultant to the secretary of war during World War II.

Copies of Clark's biography can be obtained by writing to: Clark Enterprises, 170 Mercer Street, Seattle, WA 98109.

Card sharks

Red Robin Restaurants of Seattle have turned the routine carding of customers into an alcohol-awareness program with pizzazz called "Card Sharks." CARD is an acronym that stands for Carding Aggressively for Responsible Drinking.

"We're taking what is usually a pretty dry and negative subject and trying to have some fun with it," says Jim Roths, director of operations for Red Robin. "The bottom line is that we see more responsible service as a result of the program."

The program is for employees as much as it is for customers. Materials used include laminated information cards about responsible alcohol service, staff buttons that feature the card shark logo and lobby signs listing acceptable forms of identification.

"We may have lost some business over our aggressive carding," says Roths, "but it is our responsibility to the community and to our industry to be committed to the responsible service of alcoholic beverages." Red Robin recently received an award from Washington's governor in recognition of their efforts to prevent alcohol abuse.

Menu with a nice touch

Blind and visually impaired customers will enjoy eating at Shoney's Restaurants even more now that menus printed in Braille by the Tennessee School for the Blind are available in 42 of Shoney's restaurants in Tennessee.

"By offering this service, we hope visually disabled patrons will be encouraged to eat out more often because they don't have to be dependent on a sighted person or a server to read the menu," says Boogle Bradley, director of marketing services for Shoney's Restaurants.

An estimated 8,000 to 10,000 blind or visually impaired people currently live in Tennessee. "We realize that Tennessee's visually handicapped are not going to be a large percentage of our growing customer base," says Jeff Sowell, Shoney's director of marketing, "but we want to be sure that all of our customers receive quality service."

Shoney's menu—and the spirit behind it—have been well-received. "By providing these menus, Shoney's is on the cutting edge of a movement toward helping to make public facilities more friendly to the handicapped," says Ralph Brewer, director of the Tennessee School for the Blind. "Have you ever listened to someone recite a menu and then tried to remember what they said? It's hard. This Braille menu will help the blind patron order with confidence."

Everyone loves a food fight

On April 18, the American Cancer Society will sponsor a repeat performance of last year's successful promotion: the Great American Food Fight.

Volunteers dressed as a giant carrot, banana and a bunch of grapes stalked the streets of Philadelphia last year, passing out nutrition information and encouraging people to eat right. In San Antonio, Nadler's Bakery and Deli sent out menus that featured American Cancer Society-approved menu items to all their regular takeout customers. Chefs from local restaurants in Erie County, New York, showed shoppers that nutritious cooking can be delicious by participating in supermarket cooking demonstrations.

These are just a few examples of how restaurants got involved in last year's Great American Food Fight, and this year's promotion promises to be even more successful. The message behind the promotion is simple: Choosing foods rich in vitamins A and C, low in fat and high in fiber can lower your risk of cancer.

To join in the fun this year, ask your local American Cancer Society chapter about their special restaurant kit, which features promotional materials such as tray liners/place mats, table tents, menu tags, buttons, bag art and stuffers. You can also offer Food Fight specials, sponsor a low-fat cooking workshop and use menu tags to promote healthy items.

With nearly 40 percent of adults committed to good nutrition when dining out, the Great American Food Fight is an ideal promotion for attracting health-conscious patrons.

THE GREAT AMERICAN FOOD FIGHT AGAINST CANCER. AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

Expanded group insurance plans

National Restaurant Association group insurance plans have been transferred to new underwriters, and many of them are offering increased benefits and broader coverage. Association members already insured by current plans will receive complete details in the mail. Members not insured by these plans are encouraged to review the benefits offered through the new plans.

The following group insurance coverages are available: major medical, in-hospital money plan, group term life insurance, disability income insurance, and catastrophe major medical plan. To find out more about these new group insurance plans offered to association members, call plan administrator Albert H. Wohlers & Co. at (800) 323-2106 or (708) 803-3100 in Illinois. Or write to 1440 N. Northwest Highway, Park Ridge, IL 60068.

Restaurateur disagrees with Javna

[**Editor's note:** This letter is a response to the interview with author John Javna, entitled "Some simple things restaurateurs can do to save the earth" that appeared in the October issue of ***Restaurants USA***.]

Dear Editor:
Many of Mr. Javna's ideas [for helping the environment] are common sense: "Fix leaks." "Turn out the lights." I find no fault with these sensible reminders. However, polystyrene foam foodservice containers do not deserve the hostility directed at them.

As co-owner and president of a 15-unit chain of fast food restaurants—eegee's—in Tucson, Arizona, I have battled the distortions and falsehoods about polystyrene foam foodservice packaging. I purchase more than 3 million foam cups a year to serve soft drinks, coffee, tea and our frozen fruit slush drinks.

In June 1989, the city of Tucson imposed a purchasing ban on polystyrene foam cups for all city departments. About this time, eegee's began receiving letters and comments from customers urging us to switch to paper cups. I was very concerned that I might be using a harmful product. However, the more research that I did on polystyrene foam, the more convinced I became that the polystyrene foam cup was indeed the most environmentally sound disposable available.

In July 1990 I requested that the city rescind its ban on polystyrene foam, and since that time I have provided scientific data and facts about the product. Experts [have] presented testimony about health, safety and the environmental impact of polystyrene foam before members of the Tucson city council. I'm pleased to report that the city of Tucson has evaluated the polystyrene foam

information and, as a result, has altered its purchasing policy to follow Environmental Protection Agency guidelines, which will allow the purchase of polystyrene foam foodservice products.

—Edmund Irving
President, eegee's Inc.

Editor's note: The National Restaurant Association realizes that this issue is still unresolved, and this letter is published merely to express one restaurateur's viewpoint.

Address your comments about ***Restaurants USA*** and current foodservice issues to: ***Restaurants USA*** Feedback, National Restaurant Association, 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. Submissions may be edited for length.

Higher teen-labor penalties

Beginning March 1, wage-and-hour investigators at the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) may impose penalties of up to $10,000 per violation on employers who breach federal teen-labor laws.

DOL investigators can assess the new maximum penalty, which replaces the prior maximum of $1,000, for any infractions that have taken place after November 5, 1990—the day President Bush signed the higher penalty structure into law.

Acting Labor Secretary Rod DeArment, who holds the top DOL post until the Senate confirms secretary-designate Lynn Martin, said DOL is moving quickly to train its field staff on the new policy and plans to conduct an outreach program to tell employers and employees about the higher penalties.

The Labor Department has not yet spelled out which situations will merit the maximum penalties and has not said whether the agency will adjust its entire penalty structure upward to reflect the higher maximum.

Further changes likely

The change in maximum penalties, instigated by the House Education and Labor Committee, was included in 1990's budget bill as a revenue-raiser. Under pressure to come up with nearly $4 billion in savings over five years, the panel estimated the government could raise $15 million by 1995 by upping the maximum penalty from $1,000 to $10,000.

A furious lobbying campaign led by the National Restaurant Association derailed a companion proposal that would have raised $30 million by establishing minimum fines of $1,000 per violation.

Although incoming labor secretary Martin has not said whether she plans to make teen-labor laws a high priority during her tenure, the National Restaurant Association expects the revenue-strapped U.S. Congress will try to tinker with the penalty structure again in 1991. Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee Chairman Ted Kennedy (D-MA) recently said he hopes his panel will consider further restrictions in teen-employment laws this year.

The association has formed a Teen Employment Working Group to go on the offensive for more reasonable, understandable laws.

—Denise Roach

Note: Federal child-labor laws restrict working hours and job duties for employees under 18 years of age. For more information, contact a local office of the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division. Ask for a copy of DOL's Bulletin No. 101, *Child Labor Requirements in Non-Agricultural Occupations Under the Fair Labor Standards Act.*

BOARDROOM

Foodservice supports anti-drug efforts

At a recent meeting with the U.S. attorney general, representatives of the National Restaurant Association and the Pennsylvania Restaurant Association (PRA) pledged support for government efforts to stop illegal drug trafficking. Pictured (from left to right) are William P. Fisher, association executive vice president; Michael E. Hurst, association president; Richard Thornburgh, U.S. attorney general; John Petrancosta, PRA past president; and Michael McGovern, PRA executive vice president.

DCROUNDUP

☐ *Civil rights, family leave top 1991 labor agenda.* Bills to broaden civil-rights protection for workers and to set federal leave entitlements for employees with family obligations or serious illnesses were among the first to be introduced in both the House and Senate during Congress' opening days last month.

Rep. William Ford (D-MI) and Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA), respective chairmen of the House and Senate labor committees, say they plan to move quickly to get Congress to pass these bills. Both bills were passed by Congress last year but were turned back by President Bush's vetoes.

☐ *IRS study concludes tips average 11.9 percent.* In mid-December the Internal Revenue Service delivered a long-overdue report to Congress claiming that tips in the United States average 11.9 percent and that tipped workers report slightly more than half of their tip income to the federal government.

The agency recommends that Congress strengthen 1982 tip-reporting requirements and extend these rules to all employers in order to get tipped workers to report income more fully.

☐ *New anti-discrimination rules take effect.* In response to reports that the 1986 immigration law is causing employers to discriminate against job applicants who look or sound "foreign," President Bush signed a bill late last year that doubles fines for employers who discriminate and widens the number of punishable offenses.

According to the new rules, employers will be subject to discrimination charges when they ask job applicants for more or different identity or work authorization documents than required for the I-9 forms, refuse to accept documents that reasonably appear to be genuine, or intimidate employees who file discrimination charges or say they intend to do so.

Who has answers?

Although 1990 was the year in which the environment took center stage, few issues have been resolved. For every environmental concern addressed, more questions seem to arise, and there are no easy answers.

In the months since this column began, ***Restaurants USA*** has tried to draw attention to some pressing concerns and to offer practical advice from restaurateurs who have taken a stand and gotten involved.

This month, rather than raise new issues, we present the sources of some possible answers. What follows is a sampling of places you can turn to for answers to specific environmental questions.

Nearly every environmental issue has a corresponding society, council or association to assist those interested in the issue. Many of these organizations focus on the solid-waste problem, and there is a group for virtually every material.

The **Polystyrene Packaging Council, Inc.,** located in Washington DC, is a coalition of manufacturers of polystyrene foam products, raw-materials suppliers, makers of recycling and molding equipment, and trade associations. The council provides factual information about polystyrene packaging and its environmental impact. The group emphasizes the positive attributes of polystyrene versus other materials and promotes recycling projects and other environmentally safe waste-disposal systems. The council offers technical assistance to public officials, consumers and businesses tackling the solid-waste problem. Staff members can address matters as simple as "What is polystyrene?" or as complex as the technical aspects of polystyrene recycling. The Polystyrene Packaging Council is located at 1025 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 508, Washington DC 20036 and can be reached by calling (202) 822-6424.

The **Steel Can Recycling Institute** in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, promotes steel-can recycling and is a source for both general and technical information on steel-can recycling. The association works with legislators, recyclers, businesses and municipalities. Staff members can assist in developing a recycling program or expanding one already in place. The institute also offers a quarterly newsletter known as *The Recycling Magnet*. The Steel Can Recycling Institute can be contacted at Foster Plaza 10, 680 Andersen Drive, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15220 or by telephone at (800) 876-SCRI.

The **Glass Packaging Institute** in Washington DC offers facts and advice about the recycling of glass. This information could be quite valuable to restaurateurs, since glass accounts for a large percentage of total restaurant waste. The institute is located at 1801 K Street, NW, Suite 1105-L, Washington DC 20006. Callers should ask for Chaz Miller, director of recycling, at (202) 887-4850.

Although solid-waste disposal and recycling may be the two most pressing environmental issues facing restaurateurs, there are many other environmental problems that committees are addressing. For general information on a broad range of environmental issues, you can contact the **Center for Environmental Information** in Rochester, New York. "We are an information clearinghouse and reference library on anything

Liz Dalgetty

concerning the environment—air, sea or land," says library assistant Vera Doyle. The center is located at 46 Prince Street, Rochester, New York 14607 and can be reached by calling (716) 271-3550.

A number of foodservice groups are offering symposiums and workshops for restaurateurs interested in environmental issues. Keep your eyes and ears open for such seminars.

State restaurant associations recognize the importance of responding to environmental concerns. The Illinois Restaurant Association, for example, recently held a symposium on solid waste entitled "Turning Garbage into Gold," which included a hands-on workshop for restaurateurs at various stages of implementing waste-reduction systems.

Other foodservice groups can also be sources of information. **Service America Corporation,** a dining-service management firm based in Stamford, Connecticut, hosted a day-long symposium on food packaging and waste on December 10, 1990. Participants included such firms as Coca-Cola USA, Pepsi-Cola, Ecolab and General Foods USA. Like the councils and institutes mentioned above, the symposium was developed to share information and encourage new ideas. "Our interest is not to recommend one alternative over another," says James Anderson, a region manager for Service America, "but to give them the information they need to make informed decisions."

The National Restaurant Association is also eager to provide information whenever it can. The association's technical services department, which can be reached at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5985, is a valuable source for answers about environmental issues that affect restaurateurs.

The booklet *Managing Solid Waste: Answers for the Foodservice Operator,* which was developed from the January 1990 symposium of the same name, can be purchased from the association. To order, call the association's information services and library at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960 and ask for publication PB 527.

In addition, the association offers an Executive Study Group for environmental affairs officers. For more information about this group, contact Philip Kralovec in the Chicago office at (312) 853-2525.

The organizations listed in this column are just a few of the many sources you can turn to for answers to your questions.

—Melanie A. Crosby

The flambe king

As a child in Panama City, Florida, George Williams watched in fascination as his father smothered all his food in Tabasco pepper sauce. Williams' father trucked fish to Louisiana for a living and brought the fiery sauce back to spice up the family's meals.

Williams' mother also helped develop the future chef's sensitive taste buds and love of food by preparing dishes such as stone soup. "My mother grew up in Alabama, out in the country," says Williams. "The store was 100 miles away, so they couldn't get there all the time. It became a tradition for all the neighbors to get together to make this soup with what they had: corn, tomatoes, all kinds of vegetables and this special stone with a salty taste that they could boil with the soup. When the stone rose to the top, the soup was done."

This early education in spices and flavors serves Williams well as dining-room manager and flambe chef at the Lake Charles Country Club in Lake Charles, Louisiana. Williams began working at the club as a janitor, but when he was asked to help out on busy nights, his adeptness in the kitchen caught the club manager's attention, and Williams began to work in the main dining room. Since then, Williams' reputation as a flambe chef has won him many honors, including having November 30 proclaimed George A. Williams "Flambe King" Day by the mayor of Lake Charles.

Williams says the road to success was not easy. "I learned under a lot of great people. I had to learn to

George Williams: the flambe king

imagine how things would taste in my mind. I studied gourmet books and watched cooking shows. I read and read and read," he says.

Flambe cooking at tableside appeals to Williams because, "When you pour brandy into the pan and the fire goes up in the air, it takes you out of reality. At first your ingredients may not look like anything, but then you use your imagination and you have this great steak sauce, cornbread or fettucine. When you're in the kitchen cooking, you can't see the joy on people's faces like

DESSERT CREPES

Serves 6
(12 crepes)

We've left the filling for these crepes up to the imagination of the chef. It can be anything, from vanilla ice cream and chocolate syrup to fresh fruit such as sliced strawberries and nuts.

Ingredients:

Crepes:
1 cup flour
2 eggs
1 cup milk
½ cup pumpkin puree, fresh or canned
¼ cup butter, melted
¼ cup pecans
1 Tbs. cinnamon
1 Tbs. vanilla flavoring

Sauce:
½ cup margarine
¼ cup brown sugar
1 Tbs. cocoa powder
½ Tbs. cinnamon
Juice of ½ a lemon
6 maraschino cherries, (optional)

Method:

For crepe: Put all crepe ingredients into a bowl and mix well. If you like, save some pecans to use in sauce. Pour mixture into hot flambe pan and cook for one minute on each side, similar to pancakes. Stack and keep warm while preparing sauce.

For sauce: Melt margarine in saucepan, then stir in brown sugar. Cook this mixture until it thickens. Then add cocoa, cinnamon, lemon juice, pecans and cherries if desired. Mix well. Cook mixture for a few minutes until warmed.

To prepare: Place desired filling in crepe, roll up and ladle sauce over top. Add whipped cream if desired.

—Courtesy of George Williams

Nutritional analysis per serving for crepe and sauce: 203 calories, 3 grams protein, 15 grams carbohydrate, 15 grams fat, 150 mg. sodium, 49 mg. cholesterol

HAMBURGERS A LA ROUGE

Serves 3

Ingredients:
15 ozs. ground beef, formed into 3 patties
2 ozs. onions, minced
1 stalk of green onion, chopped
1 clove of garlic, minced
Juice of ½ a lemon
1 Tbs. parsley, chopped
1½ ozs. garlic butter, clarified
1 oz. mushrooms, chopped
⅓ tspn. garlic powder
½ Tbs. dry mustard
½ Tbs. thyme
½ Tbs. caramel candy topping sauce
5 Tbs. cream
⅓ cup brandy
⅓ cup red wine
⅓ cup Worcestershire sauce
½ tspn. hot sauce
1 sprig of parsley for garnish

Method:
In small bowl mix mushrooms, garlic and garlic powder together. Set aside. Mix mustard and thyme together and place in another dish. Next, put caramel candy topping and cream into a small pitcher and stir.

Place pan on stove over fairly high heat. Pour brandy and heat for 10 seconds. Brandy will begin to caramelize. When brandy is almost dissolved, add garlic butter. Make sure there is enough brandy to ignite a flame. Put hamburgers in pan and let brown, one minute on each side. Cook ground beef one degree below doneness. If desired, add a touch of cream to pan at this point.

Add onions, green onions and minced garlic to pan and saute. Then add garlic mushrooms. Season with mustard-thyme combination and add chopped parsley. Saute. To make sauce, add lemon juice, caramel-cream mixture, red wine, Worcestershire sauce and hot sauce to pan. Stir, cooking until desired doneness. If you prefer rare meat, prepare sauce first and add hamburger last.

—Courtesy of George Williams

Nutritional analysis per hamburger: 700 calories, 41 grams protein, 13 grams carbohydrate, 48 grams fat, 549 mg. sodium, 203 mg. cholesterol

you can when you prepare their meal right in front of them," he says.

As Williams' reputation spread, he was asked to help liven up business at another local restaurant, the Chateau Charles. Now, three days a week, Williams' flamboyant tableside cooking and easy banter with customers help to increase the restaurant's business.

Williams often volunteers his cooking skills to raise money for various charities, such as a local women's shelter and the Salvation Army. "I want to show other people who are maybe down or lost that if I can come from nowhere and become a success then they can, too," says Williams. He recently offered samples of his dessert crepes outside a local Wal-Mart store and gave away recipes to those who made a $5 donation to the Salvation Army Christmas Fund. He also is a member of the Moment of Truth Singers, a gospel group that helps homeless people and those with drug problems. "I want to make a difference with my gifts if I can," says Williams.

Restaurants may want to incorporate tableside food preparation into their service, says Williams, because "it has showmanship and is exciting to watch. You can flambe just about anything. I even cook cornbread that way." Williams uses cans of butane and says that one can lasts a week. The small gas oven he uses cost $30 and is easily transported. By keeping things simple, says Williams, chefs can save money and time while catering to the current customer preference for simple, filling food.

—Jennifer Batty

A kilowatt saved . . .

The Persian Gulf crisis, fluctuations in world oil prices and public environmental awareness have combined to renew interest in energy conservation.

For foodservice operators, this situation offers an opportunity to conserve nonrenewable energy resources, help clean the air and control costs by saving on utility bills.

Restaurants are intensive energy-users, with the bulk of consumption due to the high demands of food-preparation equipment and ventilation. These two categories represent more than 60 percent of an average restaurant's energy use, and there is the potential for major savings.

Turn it off

The best conservation advice is to keep equipment clean, properly maintained and turned off when not in use. Posting and adhering to specific start-up and shutdown times for each piece of equipment can save energy without affecting product quality or customer service. Energy-management systems ranging from simple timers to microcomputers can be purchased to help save energy—but employee efforts and care can accomplish similar savings.

When purchasing equipment, choosing the right equipment can also result in savings. New technology is making available energy-efficient fryers, griddles and ovens. The National Restaurant Association's technical services department is working with Pacific Gas and Electric Company and the American Society for Testing Materials to develop standardized energy-use and productivity test methods for foodservice equipment. Such standards would help operators make more meaningful comparisons when considering equipment purchases.

Most utility companies offer energy audits to help customers manage energy-use wisely. Some utilities even include rebate programs for the purchase of energy-saving equipment. Contact your local utility to explore these approaches of saving on utility bills.

Caulk it and strip it

Seasonal changes in heating and cooling needs cause the greatest swings in energy use. Although you cannot control the weather, you can cut heating and cooling costs. Keep heating, cooling and ventilation systems clean and well-maintained. Change air filters on a regular basis. Reduce outside air infiltration as much as possible by caulking and sealing windows and utility entrances. Consider additional insulation, weather stripping or entry vestibules to retain as much tempered air as possible within the building.

Various controls and equipment may help reduce air conditioning and heating costs, from programmed thermostats to automatic economizer dampers that open automatically when outside temperature and humidity are low—thereby providing "free cooling." Heat-recovery devices have also received new interest. These systems capture heat that otherwise might be lost, such as from air-conditioning systems or large banks of refrigerators. This heat is then used to augment other systems such as water heaters. Heat-recovery devices tend to be most successful in temperate geographic areas that are not subject to wide seasonal changes.

Stop the drip

Small operational changes can make a big difference. For example, a dripping faucet can be more than nerve-wracking; it can eat away at profits. A cold-water drip could cost as much as $1.50 per week, and a hot-water drip could cost about $20 per week because of additional energy cost to heat the wasted water. Over a year's time, that "little" drip could flush $1,000 literally down the drain. Wouldn't it be worth spending a few cents and a few minutes to change the faucet washer?

These are just a few ways that a foodservice operator can save on utility bills by reducing or conserving energy use. There are many more ways to save energy, but they all require the initial decision and commitment of the operator.

—Robert E. Harrington

Energy management kit

The National Restaurant Association offers many aids to help operators manage their facilities more efficiently. One of these is the 12-piece Energy Management Survival Kit, with bulletins, brochures, worksheets and labels to help you and your employees become more energy efficient.

To order the kit, call (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960 and ask for catalog number MG310. The cost is $17.75 for association members and $28 for nonmembers.

CRIMES
AGAINST CUSTOMERS
COULD YOU BE HELD RESPONSIBLE?

The pervasiveness of crime and changing ideas about the legal liability of retailers are making restaurant security a bigger challenge and a higher priority. A lawyer explains that when it comes to customer safety, a new standard of care is developing.

by Robert Alan Palmer, J.D.

One night in 1983, customers Rosie Gould and Theresa Holmberg got into a verbal dispute with another customer, Karen Brown, in a fast food restaurant in Kansas City, Kansas. Words led to a fight, with Brown inflicting significant injuries on Gould and Holmberg, while the restaurant's assistant manager debated whether to intervene or call the police. Slow to do either, the assistant manager was ultimately persuaded to call the police by Holmberg, who threatened to leap the counter and use the restaurant's phone herself.

Gould later sued the restaurant, claiming that a foodservice operator has an obligation to protect his or her patrons from such attacks. She won. This case is one of many that are holding restaurateurs and other business operators responsible for the criminal actions of patrons, employees and outside intruders who injure customers.

As a general rule, business operators have a legal duty to exercise reasonable care to protect their patrons from physical hazards that could cause injury. That is why we mop up spills, shovel snow from sidewalks, repair broken chairs or stairs, and take precautions to avoid food contamination. Until recently, however, most courts felt that businesses had little or no obligation to prevent physical attacks against customers, unless employees themselves were responsible or unless these attacks occurred in a setting where liquor was served. Today, the legal system is expanding that duty.

The errant employee

You are legally responsible for the actions of your employees when they are acting within the scope of their employment and in furtherance of your interest. The legal system has a Latin term for this—*respondeat superior*—which means, roughly, "let the master answer." For example, if your employee, while performing his or her job, accidentally injures a customer, that customer may sue you and hold you responsible.

This liability is not supposed to extend to situations in which the employee purposely causes injury—that would be outside the scope of employment—but you may not always be able to draw this line in court. A server, for instance, might wind up in a dispute with a customer over the amount of the check. As the argument heats up, the server may strike the customer. You would argue that this action is outside the scope of employment, yet a judge or jury is likely to conclude that the physical attack was so closely related to the performance of the employee's job that you should be held liable for the employee's actions.

Further, even in situations in which an employee's actions are clearly outside the scope of employment—shooting or sexually assaulting a customer, for example—the courts are now sometimes finding employer liability under a doctrine called "negligent hiring." Under this theory, an employer who hires someone with "dangerous tendencies" and places that person in a "sensitive job"—one in which those tendencies may be inflicted on the customer—may be held responsible for the consequences. Retailers have been sued for the criminal acts of delivery drivers, and hotels have been sued for actions by maintenance people or others with access to guest rooms and opportunities for confronting guests in secluded settings.

Liability is usually not imposed if the employee has no history of criminal activity or if the employer had no chance to discover that history. However, many courts have said that employers have some obligation to inquire about criminal pasts and do background checks to uncover previous criminal convictions before placing people in sensitive jobs. Since this is a new legal idea, there is little guidance on exactly what jobs are "sensitive" in a restaurant setting and how much background checking is enough to absolve a restaurateur of liability.

Courts do recognize some of the difficulties involved for an employer trying to make determinations about a potential employee during the hiring process. One case, for example, involved a customer shot by a bartender with a previous record of violent crime unknown to the employer. Upon reviewing the facts, the court stated that bartending was not a "sensitive" job and that at least in the particular state, police records were not open to the public, so the employer would not necessarily have found out about the employee's criminal history even if he had done a background check. The decision, therefore, favored the restaurant.

Any evidence that you made an effort to find out about an applicant's past might be important in defending

yourself against a negligent-hiring claim. Employers who incorporate questions about criminal history into the application process should remember that questions about an applicant's "arrest" record are generally impermissible, while questions about "convictions" are acceptable. Phrase your inquiries accordingly and pay particular attention to time gaps on a resume or application form. Time gaps may indicate time in prison and should always be questioned.

Beware also of negligent retention—a concept similar to negligent hiring, but applying to people already on the payroll. If some employees exhibit violent behavior on the job, that behavior might serve as a warning that they may injure customers in the future. Evidence about an employee's previous acts will certainly be used against you if an injured customer sues.

Customer vs. customer

Is an operator obligated to stop a fight between customers? Liquor licensees have always had special obligations regarding the actions of customers. Most states require licensees to maintain order on their premises and take precautions to protect customers.

Customers who are known to be violent or particularly susceptible to alcohol or who have caused trouble in your establishment in the past may (and should) be prohibited from entry. Likewise, customer behavior should be monitored for any signs that a heretofore calm guest may be becoming abusive or potentially dangerous. Most server training programs cover this subject—one more reason to start a program.

Today, these rules about maintaining order could apply just as readily

NEGLIGENT HIRING

Avoid the Latest Legal Headache

by Jacquelyn Denalli

The horror stories are everywhere: After a delivery driver has an accident, a long list of moving violations the employer didn't know about is brought to light. An employee of a catering company returns to a residence after an elegant party to burglarize the home. A server makes extra imprints of a customer's credit card and uses them for fraudulent purchases. You may think these crimes are beyond your control, but a judge or jury may see things differently, under a new legal idea called negligent hiring.

A customer's decision to patronize your restaurant is an indication of faith that you will provide quality, reliability and trustworthiness in both product and service. If customers feel that faith is betrayed by the actions of one of your employees, you may be faced with an increasingly common challenge: defending yourself against a negligent-hiring suit.

Crime victims may see a business owner as the closest available "deep pocket" if a crime occurs in a work-related situation. Since the criminal court system offers little opportunity for the recovery of monetary damages from the criminal, a charge of negligent hiring may be an attempt by these victims to seek some recompense for their suffering—at your expense.

Attorney Susan McKenna of Garwood & McKenna, P.A., in Orlando, Florida, explains that the negligent-hiring theory alleges that the employer knew, or should have known, of a dangerous propensity or characteristic of an employee at the time that person was hired. If an employee injures someone or causes property damage due to this propensity or characteristic, says McKenna, "The injured party can sue the employer for putting the employee in a position where they could cause harm." In addition, McKenna has seen an increasing number of negligent-hiring suits coupled with other types of legal action, such as sexual-harassment suits.

In making decisions on negligent-hiring suits, the courts are considering the nature of the job and the extent of the pre-hire investigation. The key to a successful defense against a negligent-hiring charge is thorough background checks—something much easier said than done, especially in areas with high turnover rates.

But McKenna says, "Don't overreact by thinking you've got to do a background check that would entitle everyone you hire to a top-secret security clearance. Focus on the jobs that have a higher degree of risk."

For example, a dishwasher who has no public contact is an extremely low risk for a negligent-hiring suit. By contrast, a delivery driver can put you at serious risk if you fail to check the individual's license and record. "For higher-risk jobs, you want to be able to prove that you were reasonable in your pre-hire inquiry," McKenna says.

Conducting effective background checks can be a daunting task, especially for smaller operations without full-time human resource departments. Here are some points to keep in mind:

□ *Analyze each position* for risk potential by asking yourself questions such as: How much contact does a

Jacquelyn Denalli writes on business and marketing for a variety of publications. She is based in Orlando, Florida.

to restaurants without liquor licenses. Fast food or late-night operations are especially vulnerable to this type of customer, who may visit at the end of a binge. Establishments that allow or encourage loitering inside or outside may also be inviting criminals to prey on other customers. Remember that any history of violent behavior among your customers will serve as evidence that you knew a problem existed; if you fail to take corrective action, a lawsuit is that much more likely.

Despite your efforts, however, altercations do sometimes occur. If prevention fails and a fight or shooting does break out, restaurateurs should act promptly. Depending on the situation, operators may demand that violent or rowdy patrons leave immediately and may use whatever amount of force is necessary (but no more than that) to enforce that demand. A better option, if available, is to call the police at the first sign of trouble. Though you may be reluctant to do so for fear of overreacting, you will be glad you did if a lawsuit results. Many legal decisions find businesspeople negligent when the delay in summoning help results in extra injury or danger to customers.

Criminals who are strangers

Could you possibly be held responsible for a crime committed by someone who is neither an employee nor one of your customers? Until recently, the general rule of law was that your obligation to maintain safe business premises did not extend to protecting your customers from the criminal actions of outsiders.

Hoteliers began facing changes in this rule early in the 1970s, however, when courts started to hold that hotel operators who could have foreseen criminal activity on their premises

given employee have with the general public and with other employees? Is it necessary for them to drive? Do they serve customers in a variety of locations, such as in a catering operation? Do they handle money or have access to customers' personal effects?

□ *Develop standards* for pre-hire requirements. Once you decide what background information you want on applicants for specific positions, be consistent and apply those standards to every prospective employee.

□ *Check references*, even if you think it a waste of time. Annette Brown, director of training at Mr. B's in New Orleans, says, "Legally, the information we can get through an employment reference check is very slight and favors the employee. But we can at least check the position and dates of employment to see if there's some sort of discrepancy that will alert us to a potential problem. We don't sign off on any employee in any position without a minimum of two reference checks."

For young applicants without a work history, don't overlook personal references. There is a tendency to believe that no one would give a personal reference who would offer anything except a glowing recommendation, but there is always a chance that checking the reference will provide you with some insight.

□ *Consult your insurance agent.* Because insurance companies sometimes foot the bill in the case of a lawsuit, they may be willing to assist you with your pre-hire screening process.

□ *Use an outside investigative agency.* Pre-employment background checks can cost as little as $75 or as much as $10,000, depending on the depth required. Since most employers do not have the resources to conduct thorough investigations, an agency is an option, especially for high-risk and high-level positions.

□ *Tell the applicant* about your screening process. Advise each applicant in writing about your investigation and obtain a signed release before you begin. The release protects you and your sources in the event that you find unfavorable information that affects your hiring decision.

□ *Verify the data* applicants provide. It is usually a simple matter to check claims such as education and licensing. An applicant who lies about a college degree may well be lying about something else.

□ *Make sure every employee is legal* to work in the United States. Tracking the status of noncitizens is an ongoing process. Note the expiration date on work visas or green cards and follow up to be sure the documents are renewed properly. The Immigration and Naturalization Service can provide assistance if necessary.

□ *Document everything.* Keep records of your entire pre-hire investigation. You may know that a particular company provides only limited information in response to reference requests, but contact the company anyway and note that in your files. "If you make the inquiry but are unable to get any information, you have made a reasonable effort and you're covered," says McKenna. "If you don't at least try, and an incident resulting in a lawsuit occurs, you have no defense."

What about when you are the one being solicited for a reference by someone considering one of your former employees? As a previous employer, you're in a difficult situation: A former employee can sue for defamation if a derogatory reference is given, yet there have been instances in which past employers have been sued for failing to provide information that might have forecast undesirable behavior. Although the temptation is to warn professional associates checking on an employee you terminated for cause, many advise against doing so.

One possible solution to this dilemma is to provide departing employees with a copy of their most recent performance appraisal and indicate "reason for leaving" on that document. Let departing employees know that if they provide a copy of that appraisal to a prospective employer, you will verify its accuracy.

Because people can—and do—sue for just about anything, there is no way to guarantee that you won't become involved in a negligent-hiring suit. But the best defense is to exercise care during the hiring process. ❑

were under some obligation to guard against it. Foreseeability was determined by the crime history of both the hotel property and the surrounding area. Such decisions today commonly examine what security measures are being taken by the hotel, such as lighting, security patrols and training of staff. The more effort exerted for guest security, especially in high-crime areas, the better the defense for the hotel in the event of a suit.

This type of responsibility is now expanding to restaurants. One legal decision that dramatizes this trend is *Taco Bell, Inc., v. Lannon,* a 1987 Colorado Supreme Court decision. Lannon was a prospective customer who stumbled unknowingly into an attempted armed robbery in a Taco Bell unit and was injured by gunshots fired at him as he ran from the store. At trial, Lannon claimed that the fast food operator had a duty to protect customers from criminal acts and that the operator had breached that duty by failing to station an armed security guard in the store to deter crime.

Such security measures were required, argued Lannon's counsel, because the unit's location in a high-crime area and the fact that it had experienced 10 armed robberies in the previous three years made further robberies and possible customer injury foreseeable. The trial jury found for Lannon, awarding him $40,000, and Lannon again prevailed in Taco Bell appeals to the Colorado Court of Appeals and the Colorado Supreme Court. Because of the significance of the lower-court holdings, the National Restaurant Association joined Taco Bell by filing a friend-of-the-court brief at the Colorado Supreme Court level.

In finding for the injured customer, the Colorado Supreme Court stated that personal injury was a foreseeable consequence of an armed robbery, even though no one had been hurt in previous attempts, and that restaurant management should have guarded against future robberies, even though the exact time of any particular attempt could not be predicted. The court recognized the economic burden that providing increased security would place on the operator, but thought it appropriate for owner and customers to bear that increased cost in exchange for improved safety.

In dissent, one judge protested the imposition of police-like responsibilities upon private businesses and also expressed doubt that the presence of armed security personnel necessarily guaranteed a safer establishment. He cited a Louisiana case in which one customer was killed and another injured as robbers shot at the restaurant's security guard. In this instance, said the dissent, the restaurant had actually increased the likelihood of injury by having a guard on duty. But the majority of the Lannon court came down on the side of the injured customer and against the restaurant.

Not all crimes in restaurants have been judged foreseeable, however. In the 1987 case of *Toscano Lopez v. McDonald's,* a California appeals court was faced with the unusual circumstances of the 1984 shooting that left 21 dead and 11 injured in a McDonald's restaurant in San Ysidro, California. In this and other suits brought by survivors or victims' families, plaintiffs argued that McDonald's should have employed security personnel to prevent the crime. There was evidence in the case that McDonald's had considered such staffing but determined that the crime potential of the property did not justify such measures. The court in this decision thought such security would have been ineffective in stopping this crime.

Noting that gunman James Huberty entered the restaurant with the sole motive of killing, rather than with intent to rob, the court said that although guards, cameras, alarms or other security devices might deter the ordinary criminal, they "could not reasonably be expected to deter or hinder a maniacal, suicidal assailant unconcerned with his own safety, bent on committing mass murder."

Though the California court took notice of similar incidents in other parts of the country, it refused to find this mass murder foreseeable. "Huberty's deranged and motiveless attack," said the court, "is so unlikely to occur within the setting of modern business life that a reasonably prudent business enterprise would not consider its occurrence in attempting to satisfy its general obligation to protect business invitees from reasonably foreseeable criminal conduct."

The conclusion: McDonald's had no duty to anticipate such an unlikely occurrence and had no effective way to guard against it.

A higher standard

Though only a state court decision, the implications of the *Taco Bell, Inc., v. Lannon* ruling are significant. It is one of few cases thus far involving the security responsibilities of restaurateurs; and to the extent that its argument may be accepted by courts in other states, restaurant operators may now be obligated to devote substantially greater resources to security. Furthermore, since crime is now so pervasive as to be foreseeable at almost any time and place, even operators in "good" areas with little previous crime are now held to a higher standard than before.

In addressing the responsibility, restaurateurs should start by looking around their neighborhoods. The criminal "record" of the restaurant and its surroundings is still the key item to consider. Then take a look at other operators in your area or similar locations. What are they doing in terms of security? A court is likely to define your obligations in terms of what other foodservice establishments in similar circumstances are doing. If you do not compare favorably, a plaintiff's attorney will certainly point this out in court.

Finally, stay current with improvements in security practices in nearby establishments and in the industry as a whole. Standards for determining reasonable care in the area of security are subject to technological advances and are changing regularly. Industry publications and trade association seminars, meetings and bulletins are good sources of information. Wise restaurateurs will plan ahead to protect their customers and themselves. ❑

Robert Alan Palmer is associate professor in the Center for Hospitality Management at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, and former legal counsel to the National Restaurant Association.

THE HEIMLICH MANEUVER

Part of a New Standard of Service?

Is anyone in your establishment trained to help a choking patron? Regardless of any legal implications about providing first aid, caring for customers may sometimes include saving their lives.

by Joan E. Herlong

It is not hard to imagine this scene in any restaurant: It's a busy Saturday night, at least a 30-minute wait for a table. At a table in the front window, a birthday party of six is having a particularly good time, laughing and toasting their guest of honor with champagne over a steak dinner.

Then a woman at the table screams. Her dinner partner is slumped over his plate, blue in the face and apparently unconscious. One of the guests yells, "Call 911!" Another calls out for a doctor, believing the unconscious man is having a heart attack.

Fortunately, an observant waiter quickly and calmly approaches the unconscious man and grasps him from behind, hands clasped together just below the man's rib cage. With a few strong upward thrusts, the waiter clears the customer's breathing passage. The piece of beef that had been blocking the man's airway literally pops out.

The man gasps for air, suddenly able to breathe again. The fear he felt before passing out has been replaced by embarrassment, but he is grateful to the waiter who has saved his life.

This scene could have ended tragically in death or permanent brain damage if someone nearby had not been trained in the Heimlich Maneuver, the anti-choking method introduced by Henry Heimlich in 1974. If the restaurant staff had merely called 911 in this situation, the customer would probably have died.

Would anyone in your operation be able to help a choking victim? So far, no restaurateur has ever been held liable for not doing more than calling 911 in a choking incident, even in fatal cases. But customer expectations of "standard" service and care are changing, and it is possible that the law may change over time with regard to a restaurateur's obligation to a choking victim.

Restaurants and choking

According to American Red Cross estimates, about 2,000 to 3,000 people will die from choking in the United States in a given year. Prior to 1974, when the Heimlich Maneuver was introduced, there were about 20,000 choking fatalities each year. Roughly 60 percent of all choking incidents occur in restaurants, and that is why restaurateurs may wish to take note of the Heimlich Maneuver.

Kathy Sprague, a CPR instructor with the American Red Cross in Greenville, South Carolina, says restaurants account for a fairly large proportion of choking incidents because customers do more than just eat when they dine out. "The chances of choking are greatly increased by drinking alcohol before or during the meal, by talking excitedly or laughing while eating, and by eating too quickly," says Sprague. "Denture wearers, senior citizens and children under six are also prone to choking because they may not be aware that food isn't chewed properly before swallowing."

"In fact," continues Sprague, "many items on children's menus in restaurants pose a choking risk. Hot dogs, chicken or fish nuggets, popcorn and hard candy are all just the right size for blocking a child's throat."

Henry Heimlich, the American doctor who invented the rescue technique that bears his name, is president of the Heimlich Institute, a nonprofit research organization in Cincinnati. Heimlich explains why calling 911 in a choking incident is not enough: "When choking, minutes count. After two to three minutes, the victim loses consciousness. After three to four minutes, there is brain damage. After five minutes without oxygen, death occurs. Calling 911 is a good backup move, but no real help in a choking situation," says Heimlich.

"When a person falls unconscious in a restaurant," says Heimlich, "more than 98.5 percent of the time it is due to choking, not a heart attack. If they

are unconscious, you are already into the second or third minute, and so time is absolutely critical."

Proper training vital

According to Heimlich, his maneuver can be learned in a matter of minutes through reading material, video instruction or in a first aid class. The National Restaurant Association, the American Red Cross and the Heimlich Institute all provide charts and instructional materials on the Heimlich Maneuver.

Although the Heimlich Maneuver is simple to learn, it is very important to be properly trained before actually performing this technique or any other first aid procedure. Performing the Heimlich Maneuver unnecessarily or incorrectly can cause harm to a person, and the Heimlich Maneuver for a choking infant or toddler is markedly different from the maneuver for adults.

Formal training also eliminates some popular myths about helping a choking victim. As Heimlich explains, "Whacking a choking victim on the back is actually harmful, more likely to lodge the food deeper. I call these whacks 'death blows.' A choking person who can still talk or cough should not be touched, just encouraged to cough more. The absolute question is 'Are you choking?' The Heimlich should only be performed when the victim cannot cough or speak at all."

Sprague adds that "the Heimlich Maneuver can even enable you to save your own life. You can perform it on yourself by leaning over the back of a chair and hitting yourself right above the navel with the top of the chair."

First aid laws

Laws on first aid training requirements for restaurants vary by state. For example, Michigan and Kentucky require only that restaurants post Heimlich Maneuver instructional diagrams where all employees can see them. Failure to post the instructions counts as a violation under health inspection codes.

Other states, such as Florida and New York, require formal Heimlich Maneuver training for foodservice personnel, as well as posting instructional signs. Someone trained in the Heimlich Maneuver must be on duty during operational hours. Other states, such as West Virginia, have at least considered or introduced legislation requiring CPR and/or Heimlich Maneuver training.

Most of these first aid laws grant "Good Samaritan" immunity to lawsuits stemming from first aid attempts. Most states carry "Good Samaritan" statutes to protect anyone who provides first aid in an emer-

CPR—a separate skill

Training for certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or CPR, often includes instruction in the Heimlich Maneuver. However, the Heimlich Maneuver has nothing to do with CPR and is an entirely separate procedure. CPR is performed only on a victim who has no pulse or detectable breathing, so the training is far more complicated and time-consuming than training for the Heimlich Maneuver.

The Red Cross, the American Heart Association and many local emergency-response teams and health-care centers offer CPR classes. The procedure is usually taught in two consecutive sessions, about two to three hours each. CPR classes range in cost from about $15 to $25 per person.

While knowledge of the Heimlich Maneuver may be particularly important for employees in restaurants—because eating and choking are sometimes related—CPR is not a concern specific to restaurants. Although Henry Heimlich, the doctor who invented the anti-choking method that bears his name, advocates learning first aid including CPR, he opposes mandatory CPR training for restaurant employees, noting that even physicians are not required to learn CPR. "I have very strong feelings about CPR," says Heimlich. "It's much more complicated [than the Heimlich Maneuver] and is more difficult to learn and administer.

"I do not agree that restaurateurs should be required to learn CPR any more than a clerk in a store should learn it," continues Heimlich. "My advice to restaurant operators is to accept any equitable laws concerning choking, but resist any laws concerning CPR training. Why should restaurateurs be singled out for such training?"

Some learn both

The Chart House restaurant in Dobbs Ferry, New York (one of 65 Chart House restaurants), requires all its managers to be trained in the Heimlich Maneuver and to be CPR-certified. General manager Stewart Newbold explains, "We started the program on our own about two years ago. I don't know whether New York law requires it, and truthfully I don't care. The law is often way behind what people should have been doing for years anyway. We are simply trying to be attuned to all our customers' needs."

Although Newbold does not recall any incidents requiring CPR, "there have been at least two cases in the last two years where the Heimlich Maneuver saved lives in our restaurant."

More than 95 percent of all the managers at Ryan's Family Steak Houses are CPR-certified. Certification has been part of the six-week entry level training course at corporate headquarters for about three years. Randy Hart, vice president of human resources for Ryan's Family Steak Houses, relates that "the CPR program was not prompted by a lawsuit or fear of one. We're not concerned from a liability standpoint. It was suggested about four or five years ago by the trainees themselves. We're just trying to be proactive in total service to our customers."

CPR training adds about $20 to the cost of training each manager, but Hart says that "cost is not a consideration. I believe we would do it even if it cost us $50 per manager. There is no value you can put on a human life."

Hart says he is aware that heart attacks are no more likely to occur in restaurants than anywhere else. He notes, "We offer this training not just from a 'good business' standpoint but also for personal development. A manager may never have to use CPR in one of our stores—I hope they won't have to. But there may come a time, in his own family or in some situation outside of work, that CPR proves helpful. You also have to keep in mind that each of our stores serves 9,000 to 10,000 people per week, so our likelihood of dealing with a heart attack is probably greater than the risk for the average restaurant."

Formal training helps eliminate popular myths about helping a choking victim.

gency situation. That means that, theoretically, you should not be held liable for the results of your efforts to provide first aid. These statutes do not require one to help in an emergency, but they do provide liability protection if one chooses to intervene. However, once a person intervenes in a first aid situation, that person is obligated to continue treating the victim and to remain with the person until further help arrives.

There are, of course, gray areas in the law. Attorney Thomas Elenbaas of Fullerton, California, represented a family in a wrongful-death suit against a large restaurant chain. Elenbaas' client sued when her mother died as a result of the improper application of the Heimlich Maneuver by a restaurant employee. In this case, the customer was not actually choking, just coughing. The employee performed the maneuver on her without warning. The customer's spleen was ruptured, and she later died.

Although the settlement terms of this case are confidential, attorney Elenbaas is willing to comment on the issue of the Heimlich Maneuver itself. "The Heimlich is a great maneuver to remove an obstruction from someone's throat," allows Elenbaas, "and I think all restaurants should know it. But it is imperative that restaurant personnel be thoroughly trained. It is a potentially dangerous maneuver when applied improperly. People can cause bruised or broken ribs—or even death—if they are not adequately trained. Before applying it, the restaurant staff should determine that the customer actually needs the Heimlich Maneuver."

Laws of common sense

Regardless of what individual states require, as the Heimlich Maneuver becomes a household term, more and more customers will expect restaurant employees to be trained in the procedure. Anthony Marshall, dean of the school of hospitality at Florida International University in Miami, advises restaurateurs to "forget the law and consider the law of common sense."

From the standpoint of good citizenship, says Marshall, all hotels and restaurants should have their people trained in the Heimlich Maneuver. "All the better ones do it," he says. "It's part of a growing movement." Marshall also believes that under common law, a restaurant definition of "reasonable care" may extend to having at least one person on duty trained in the Heimlich Maneuver.

Marshall cautions restaurateurs that "common-law negligence is an ever-growing, evolutionary thing. Calling 911 is a standard practice in an emergency, but as more restaurants make it a standard practice to be trained in the Heimlich, it becomes a new standard of reasonable care."

In Marshall's opinion, workers in restaurants and hotels should be trained in the Heimlich Maneuver. "It's the right thing to do in terms of good citizenship, in terms of economics and in terms of our image as caring members of our community," he says. Marshall does not worry about potential legal liabilities involved in raising employees to a "higher standard of care" by training them in the Heimlich Maneuver.

"Some restaurants may resist training in the Heimlich Maneuver over fear of what could happen if an employee improperly applied it," admits Marshall. "But would they really want to bar training altogether if it were their own son or daughter who suddenly started choking? Not training in the Heimlich Maneuver is the wrong place to pinch pennies."

Legal battles over the use of the Heimlich Maneuver by a properly trained employee are rare. However, Henry Heimlich is frequently called in as an expert witness in cases in which the plaintiff maintains that the maneuver should have been performed. "I have testified in many cases," says Heimlich, "where the Heimlich Maneuver was not done and a lawsuit resulted."

Many restaurants are initiating their own training programs for the Heimlich Maneuver. In many cases, this training is a response to growing public awareness, not a response to state requirements.

Since 1978, P. J. Skidoos restaurant in Fairfax, Virginia, has trained its managers in the Heimlich Maneuver. Manager Nick Bells says, "We are mostly concerned about choking because we serve a lot of beef dishes." The only choking instance that Bells recalls in the restaurant occurred about five years ago when an elderly woman began to choke on some food, before a nearby patron administered the Heimlich Maneuver. "One of the other customers happened to see the lady first and helped her out," says Bells. "We were just glad she was OK." ❑

Joan Herlong is a freelance writer in Greenville, South Carolina.

Learning the Heimlich Maneuver

Restaurateurs interested in training staff members in the proper application of the Heimlich Maneuver can purchase materials outlining the procedure from the following sources:

☐ The National Restaurant Association offers an 11-by-17-inch wall chart entitled *First Aid for Choking*, suitable for display in the eating establishment. The cost is $4 for members and $8 for nonmembers. You may order by sending a check or money order to the association's publications department, 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington DC 20036-3097. For credit-card orders call the association's Information Service and Library between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Eastern Time) at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960. Ask for publication PB385.

☐ A video entitled *The Heimlich Maneuver: How to Save a Choking Victim* is available from AIMS Media in Van Nuys, California, by calling (800) 367-2467. Ask for tape 9712.

☐ EDUMED, Inc., offers wall charts, wallet cards and 8½-by-11-inch charts, as well as other Heimlich Maneuver materials. Write them at: EDUMED, Inc., Box 52, Cincinnati, OH 45201 or call (513) 742-4827.

RESTAURANTS

HEAD BACK HOME

Whether it's called comfort food or nouvelle grandma, homestyle cooking is wooing Americans.

by Leslie Pietrzyk

Martha Vaughan

In these days of economic uncertainty, crowded highways and generally hectic lives, people are seeking a stress antidote in the form of the quieter, more peaceful times they remember from the past. How do consumers want to unwind? Not over a stiff drink, but over some good, hearty cooking. And not necessarily at home, because more and more restaurant operators are creating a cozy, homelike atmosphere in the restaurant.

Essential to that environment are the sturdy, no-nonsense dishes that fed the generations: meat loaf, mashed potatoes, beef stew, pot roast, chicken a la king, bread pudding, pot pie. These are the basics that helped us through childhood. And now the indications are that we want this same sort of food to help us get through the '90s.

Experts are calling this style by many names—real food, back to basics, even haute grandma—but the customers are simply calling for it. "Meat loaf cross-references everyone," says Kathy Jones, owner of Season's Best, a 136-seat restaurant that opened three years ago in the college town of Iowa City, Iowa. Season's Best features local and Midwestern specialties as well as childhood favorites such as meat loaf and bread pudding. "Almost everyone is attracted to the basics," she explains. "Even our 'gourmet' people who come in regularly for pheasant and venison are attracted to the meat loaf and chicken pot pie we serve. And we have grandma-types who come in just for the meat loaf."

Jones feels that "there's a renaissance in things that you grew up with. The people going out to eat are baby-boomers who remember those things."

Margaret Lupo, owner of Atlanta's Mary Mac's Tea Room, a 55-year-old Southern institution that serves up to 2,000 meals daily, explains the popularity of her family-style cooking: "People are lured away from basic food with a sort of snobbism and a desire to taste and know other foods. After they've done that, they come back home."

And there are practical reasons behind the popularity of homestyle cuisine, says Kathy Casey, head of her own consulting and restaurant development firm. "Nearly all families are double-working," she says, "and there's not a person at home to cook." Casey developed the decor and was the consulting chef for Buddy's Homesick Cafe, a 66-seat Seattle restaurant offering homestyle specialties such as chicken-fried steak and roast turkey. Buddy's opened in July 1990. "People want nurturing food," says Casey, "and they're looking for good value for their dollar."

Reliable recipes

Mary Mac's Tea Room has been serving Southern cooking to Atlantans, tourists and convention-goers for 55 years. Margaret Lupo bought the restaurant from its founder in 1962, and she is carrying on the tradition of relying on old recipes for popular favorites. "I still do a boiled custard that my grandmother made," says Lupo. "The recipe hasn't changed a bit."

That is not to say that an established homestyle restaurant such as Mary Mac's can rest on its laurels and not keep pace with the changing demands of today's restaurant-goers. Lupo realizes that health and nutrition have become concerns for many people, and she explains that some "recipes have been adjusted over the years to avoid things that are obviously not nutritional." For example,

PULL OUT AND SAVE

1990 RESTAURANTS USA

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less bacon fat is used as a seasoning when preparing vegetables, and they are cooked for a shorter time. The nutrient-rich broth is then saved and used in sauces or soups. Lupo has given up using lard except in breads. And the most popular item served at Mary Mac's—fried chicken—is prepared in a way that keeps the crust "no more fat-filled than any other bread," according to Lupo.

Down-home French

Down-home cooking isn't reserved for traditional American foods. Cuisines that are typically perceived as "fancy" are also moving toward their roots. For example, French cuisine is being scaled down—not on quality or service but in the types of dishes offered. Frederic Perrier is the executive chef at La Cite, a year-old brasserie in New York City that seats 350. "We serve classical, traditional recipes from different parts of France," explains Perrier. "People are looking not to spend too much money. These recipes are a full meal with one dish. You don't have to eat an appetizer, because these are all garnished with vegetables." Items such as beef stew, lamb stew and cassoulet are popular at La Cite, particularly for dinner, when a hearty meal is expected. "At lunch, people are looking for something lighter," says Perrier. Classic French dishes are also served at lunch, but they tend to be lighter ones such as salade nicoise made with fresh tuna.

La Brasserie in Washington DC is another French restaurant that recently started offering traditional dishes. Raymond Campet, co-owner of the 135-seat restaurant, mentions the downturn in the economy as one reason La Brasserie made some adjustments to its menu. "In the 1980s, there was a tendency to have the nouvelle cuisine," he explains. "To do so required more staff in the kitchen. Classic cooking uses less staff."

Additionally, nouvelle cuisine calls for expensive ingredients: lobster, foie gras, caviar, truffles. This is not the case with some of La Brasserie's most popular traditional items. For example, beef burgundy served with white onions and bacon is an alternative to nouvelle cuisine, as is cassoulet with duck. "Duck is less expensive than veal or beef," says Campet. "The dish calls for beans on top, and there are no decorations because it is served in a bowl." Consequently these dishes cost less to prepare.

Another popular item on the changing menu is veal blanquette, which Campet says "was served every Monday in my house when I lived in France because that's laundry day, and my mother could put it on to cook and not worry about it." His mother's recipe is used at the restaurant.

New traditional

Buddy's Homesick Cafe opened last year in June and shortly thereafter was serving up to 650 people daily—10 turns. "People want to have fun when they go out," says Kathy Casey, "and they want things to eat that are recognizable—but with a twist." For example, Buddy's serves shrimp cocktail in a martini glass. The signature dessert is a Cracker Jack sundae: vanilla ice cream, fresh butterscotch, whipped cream and a whole package of Cracker Jack. Topping the sundae is the toy prize.

"My mom and grandmother were really good cooks," says Casey. "My mom made really yummy pot roast." So Buddy's serves traditional American pot roast—one of the most-requested items on the menu. Also in demand are meat loaf, hand-patted hamburgers (with a secret seasoning) and chicken-fried steak. "We hand-pound it until it's paper thin, put it in a light buttermilk wash, dredge it in seasoned flour, and it's served with milk gravy," says Casey of Buddy's chicken-fried steak.

Also contributing to the hominess of the food is the casual atmosphere of Buddy's. To decorate the restaurant, Casey went to garage sales and bought unusual items to fit with the idea of home cooking. The look became complete when customers started bringing in things from their own homes. Casey also worked with artists to come up with lively diner-style logos and illustrations.

Kathy Jones, owner of Season's Best, thinks mom's recipes are here to stay. "It's not trendy; it's just good home cooking," says Jones. A top-selling item on the Season's Best menu is meat loaf. "But we stuff it with shaved ham, Swiss cheese and spinach, and we serve it in a creole sauce with roast new potatoes," says Jones. "A very common statement we hear is, 'Well, my mom never made meat loaf like this!' " Bread pudding, another favorite, is "jazzed up with Jack Daniels whiskey sauce," says Jones, again showing how the restaurant takes mom's basic cooking one step further.

So is it true that we can't go home again? Perhaps. But when something deep inside cries for the perfect simplicity of a slice of pot roast, a dish of rice pudding or a steaming bowl of hearty stew, it's good to know that the yearning can be fulfilled. ❑

Leslie Pietrzyk is a Washington DC-area writer.

CRISPY FRIED CHICKEN

Serves 4

Ingredients:
3 to 3½-lb. fryer chicken, cut into 8 pieces
Salt and white pepper
Vegetable oil for frying

Batter #1:
1 cup tepid water
1 tspn. salt
½ tspn. white pepper
1 cup all-purpose flour
2 drops yellow food coloring

Batter #2:
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 tspn. salt
½ tspn. white pepper

Method:
Rinse chicken pieces under running water and pat dry. Sprinkle salt and white pepper over chicken and set aside for 10 minutes. Fill 12-inch frying pan or deep fryer half full with vegetable oil and heat to 325° F. Mix batter #1 ingredients in a bowl. Place chicken pieces in this mixture. Then in a separate bowl combine batter #2 ingredients. Lift chicken from batter #1 and roll in batter #2 mixture; shake off excess flour. Fry about 8 minutes on each side. Drain well on paper towels.

—Courtesy of Mary Mac's Tea Room

An Interview with Madeline Triffon

A SOMMELIER WITH AN EAR FOR WINE

by Joan E. Herlong

Many customers feel that ordering wine with dinner is like taking an IQ test in a foreign language. Customers—and your wine sales—are often also daunted by the intimidating prospect of asking the sommelier for assistance. As Master Sommelier Madeline Triffon explains, neither arrogance nor sophistication will sell wine—but simple and sincere service will.

Given the formidable trappings of wine, any fine restaurant with a well-stocked wine cellar should also have a well-versed wine seller. Triffon recently joined the staff of The Rattlesnake Club in Detroit, where she is their "first and only wine steward," one of only 13 master sommeliers in the United States.

Most wine experts, of course, have a "taste" for wine. Triffon says she has an "ear" for wine as well, developed over years of simply listening to her customers' needs and reading their body language. Triffon agreed to share what she has learned about wine service—and how she uses it—with ***Restaurants USA.***

***Restaurants USA:* Can you "read" a table as you approach it and know what kind of wine they're likely to buy?**

Madeline Triffon: No, but I can read a customer's reactions to my questions. For example, I may notice that the customer is looking at wines by the glass on the first page of the wine list. If he's interested in wine by the glass, I'm not going to push him into buying a full bottle. But I might say, "Perhaps you'd care for a recommendation?" and then point one out. That may sound pushy, but it's all in the delivery. My tone must convey my honest desire to help make the right choice for them.

Body language plays a strong role. His eyes may light up, and he may turn toward me, intrigued that I feel confident enough to express an opinion, or relieved that he can rely on me instead of going through the list on his own. About half the time I find that he'll say, "Yes, that would be helpful." Other times, the customer might not even look at me or acknowledge my offer, so I know to back off.

It's important to read their faces. You'll know when you're losing your audience and your credibility if what you say is boring them or confusing them. If you get too technical in your descriptions, it all sounds like science fiction. Their eyes glaze over, they look bored—the spark is gone. In that case, I backpedal fast and use simple terms that everybody understands.

What terms work best in communicating a wine's flavor to the customer?

The longer I've been in the business, the simpler the language I use. I avoid wine terminology. "Dry" or "fruity" mean different things to different people. "Oaky" in wine-speak means full-flavored or concentrated, but customers tend to think it means woody or dry. I avoid flavor terms, but I do talk about texture and taste. I might describe a wine as crisp, astringent, light or "with a touch of sweetness." These terms make sense to people and sound more appetizing than "oaky." Sometimes I might use anthropomorphic expressions to describe a wine, such as "shy" or "spunky." But you have to be careful not to go overboard in that direction.

I always assume the customer knows just as much as I do about wine and that they just lack the nomenclature.

I also might ask customers to talk about a wine they've had and liked, and we go from there. Once in a while, if I'm really stumped, I'll bring them a sample glass from the bar. It never fails—even if they don't like it. If they taste it and say, "Oh, this is a bit too sweet," I still have a much better idea of what they want, and they can see that I'm working hard to find what will please them.

What wines sell best, as a rule?

Because they are familiar names, cabernets and chardonnays really sell themselves. But customers are becoming more broad-minded, willing to try new things.

For instance, we currently have a small Italian selection of white wines, but it's absolutely running out the door! We find that customers are very receptive to trying these as a nice alternative to the more familiar cabernets and chardonnays, and they are often in greater harmony with the menu.

What is the best way to approach the table?

I'm not immediately identifiable as the sommelier or wine steward. I don't wear a sommelier's medallion. It often works for me to say, "Were you looking to order wine right away?" or "May I recommend something from the wine list?" I'm inviting them to let me take the heat off them, if they are uncomfortable with ordering wine.

Do you generally offer the wine list to the gentleman at the table?

There has been a big change in wine-ordering protocol in the last three years. You can't assume the gentleman is necessarily going to taste or choose the wine. Many times, even with a party of two, it's not clear whether you're dealing with a client/boss situation, a job interview, a friendship or a romantic evening. Even with a couple out together for the evening, I can't assume. Often she will be more interested in discussing the wine than he will be. If it's not clear, I simply ask, "Who would like to taste the wine?" Many women are really delighted by this approach. So many women have said, "Thank you for asking!" It helps make the experience more participatory, more relaxed.

How do you balance the customer's concern for price with your goal of increased wine sales?

An attitude I share with the management at The Rattlesnake Club is offering the customer value. I know money is an issue, and I'm sensitive to that. My goal is to widen my customer base. I mean, do you want to sell $150 bottles of wine to a few people or $35 bottles to a full crowd? Ultimately, serving the customer's interests is the best way to serve the restaurant's interests.

As a rule of thumb, you can expect people to spend about as much on a bottle of wine as they would on the entree. For example, if most entrees are about $20, you can expect them to spend about $20 or more on a bottle of wine with dinner. I might ask, "Am I in the right range?" or I might suggest two similar wines in different price ranges to let the customer choose without making price an overt issue in front of his guests.

Down-selling is often the key to increased wine sales, even with really big spenders. I have learned something: People will be very happy to spend less than they assumed they would have to on a bottle of wine if you give them the chance. For example, I'll notice a customer is looking in the $35 price range on the wine list. He will often be happy—really delighted—if I can turn him on to a similar $25 bottle of wine that's a better value. That does not mean that he won't be willing to order a premium bottle another time.

Everybody likes a good deal. Occasionally I'll purposely down-sell a customer who would easily spend $100 on a bottle of wine by recommending a good $65 bottle. The important thing is that I've gained his trust and opened him up to a whole new world of wine that doesn't have to be so expensive to be delicious. Next time, they're more likely to think, "Let's let Madeline pick for us." They know they won't get burned. You'll look like a million bucks if you make the guest look like a million bucks, and he'll be happy he didn't spend too much.

Is it proper for the wine steward to steer the customer away from an "inappropriate" wine choice?

A lot of restaurants get into a dictator mode with wine, and they'll tell a customer this or that is inappropriate. It's true that lighter wines better complement lighter entrees such as fish. If, for example, a customer orders a red bordeaux with his fish, the wine could overpower the taste of the fish. I might say, "That particular wine is a bit astringent, this other red is a bit lighter." But I'm not going to insist that he order a white wine with his fish. Whether the customer appreciates wine the same way I do is really none of my business. Being sensitive to what the guest wants—even if it's not what I would recommend—is what service is all about.

Does offering wine by the glass help or hinder wine sales?

We encourage wine by the glass whenever possible. It increases the customer's options—having different wines with different courses, for example. With our greater alcohol awareness, people are drinking less—some not at all—and that's good. Wine by the glass programs help keep everyone at the table happy.

From the restaurant's point of view, cost is quite often better on wine by the glass, although the cash flow is better on wine by the bottle. There are different markups involved.

How do you train your staff to sell wine effectively?

I can't handle every table personally, so the most vital part of my job is staff training. The whole point of the master sommelier system is to share knowledge with other people coming up in the business.

I am self-educated as a sommelier. I started out in 1977 in a formal French dining room at the Westin Hotel with no experience whatsoever. For years, before I took any kind of exams or entered any competitions, I kind of resented not having a mentor. But I really believe the wine and the customers are the best teachers.

The attitude of service—"How can I help you?" rather than "What can I sell you?"—is really the most important aspect of wine sales. You are going to make a lot more money for the restaurant and for yourself if you concentrate on truly serving the customer.

For example, when you see that the bottle of wine at the table is finished, you do not bring another bottle to the table and say, "Shall I chill another bottle for you?" It puts the customer on the spot to actually send the bottle away. Instead, you should say something like, "I see you're out of wine. Would you care to have me chill another bottle for you?" A self-serving or insensitive attitude poisons the whole customer/server relationship. If you do that, the customer can get spooked; he can wash his hands of the whole thing.

Who is the ideal wine customer?

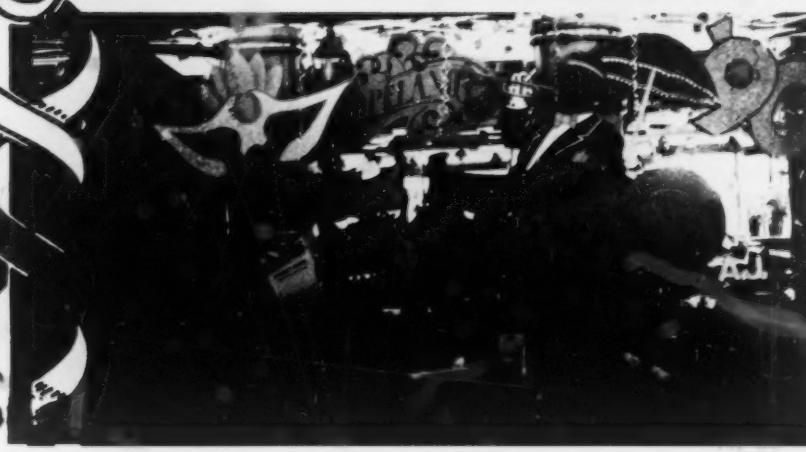
The customer can't say something wrong; he is not being tested. I am happiest when people are frank about all their needs. It makes my job a lot easier when someone says, "Madeline, I'd like a nice full-flavored chardonnay for under $30." I know I'm successful when I get a customer to trust me enough to be candid about everything he's looking for in a wine.

The whole point is the customer, serving the customer. I cannot overemphasize that point. I enjoy service, there's a love there, and that makes it easy. ❑

Joan Herlong is a freelance writer in Greenville, South Carolina.

SUCCESSFUL HOLIDAY PROMOTI

by Jennifer Batty



Eating and holidays go hand in hand. That's why restaurateurs spend time and energy planning holiday promotions. After running several holiday promotions, however, some ideas may start to seem old hat to both restaurateurs and their customers. For a fresh twist, some operators have highlighted unusual holidays or approached popular holidays from a new angle.

Fattening up a Tuesday

Copeland's restaurant in Alexandria, Virginia, has proven that an operation does not have to be in New Orleans to hold a Mardi Gras celebration. Mardi Gras (or Fat Tuesday) falls each year on Shrove Tuesday, the day before Lent begins, and is celebrated in New Orleans and other cities with parades, masked balls, eating and drinking. Nationwide, the holiday seems to be gaining in popularity because of its association with good times.

Copeland's successfully captured this festive spirit during its Mardi Gras promotion last year. Copeland's features Louisiana-style cuisine, so a Mardi Gras celebration was a natural fit.

Linda Roth, president of her own public relations firm, helped develop the plans for the Copeland's promotion. Roth contacted Eastern Airlines and asked them to donate two round-trip tickets to New Orleans in exchange for a mention in Copeland's promotional material for the event. According to Roth, the chance to win a week-long trip with airfare and accommodations helped draw a large crowd.

Roth also lined up local radio station WCXR to broadcast live from the restaurant on the day of the event. "The radio station helped a lot. Not only did we buy spots, the disc jockeys mentioned [the promotion] on their own because they wanted a good turnout," says Roth.

To further bolster interest in Copeland's among potential Mardi Gras revelers, flyers about the celebration were sent in advance to local members of a social organization made up of transplanted Louisianans. "You wouldn't believe how many people we had here from Louisiana. We bought all these beads and doubloons to hand out to people, and here these people were bringing in hundreds of their own," she says.

To give the restaurant the visual feel of Mardi Gras, Copeland's commissioned a local artist to create huge drawings of New Orleans icons. The large works included images such as the wrought-iron trellises of French Quarter balconies, feathered and bejeweled masks, musicians at a jazz funeral and Louisiana crawfish.

The Friday before the big event, staff members stayed until the wee hours of the morning, decorating the restaurant with the large drawings, feathered masks and the colors of Mardi Gras—green, gold and purple. Festivities began at 2 p.m. on Mardi Gras. Each person coming in to Copeland's received a slice of "king cake." King cakes are a Mardi Gras tradition: A nut or toy is baked inside a king cake, and the person whose cake slice contains the prize is king for the day. Copeland's baked 30 king cakes with a toy doll in each, and lucky slice holders received prizes such as athletic club memberships, movie passes, T-shirts, free appetizers and dinners at the restaurant.

Copeland's restaurant in Alexandria, Virginia, offered revelers a colorful, tuneful Mardi Gras celebration that included the chance to win a trip to New Orleans.

A live Dixieland band helped create a feeling that customers were in New Orleans. The waitstaff dressed in green, gold and purple, and layered themselves with strings of beads. "Customers could purchase feathered masks from their servers, and by the end of the night almost everyone was

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Holidays can be great hooks for drawing customers into the establishment. This article reports on successful promotions that operators ran last year on holidays that fall during the first part of the year.

ONS

covered in beads and feathers," says Roth.

The promotion was a resounding success. "We did outrageous sales. We must have had 400 to 500 people come through here," says Roth. "And that was also the biggest problem; we had no idea we would get that kind of response and it was just too many people. You could hardly move."

This year, says Roth, security has been added to the budget for the event. "We are going to limit the number of people we let in and watch people more closely," she says. For those who plan to celebrate Fat Tuesday in their operations, Roth recommends that the servers be given good background information on New Orleans and Mardi Gras. "We're lucky because a lot of our people are from Louisiana and know about Mardi Gras. Servers should be able to answer patrons' questions about Mardi Gras. This year Mardi Gras falls on February 12, 1991. Next year's date for Fat Tuesday is March 3, 1992.

Cinco de Mayo

May 5th is one of the most-celebrated days in Mexico, a national holiday commemorating a Mexican battle victory over invading French forces in 1862. The holiday, known as Cinco de Mayo, is a time for parades, parties and dances.

Macayo Mexican Restaurants held a successful Cinco Fiesta in their units last year, culminating in a tent party at the Scottsdale, Arizona, operation. Macayo even managed to do some good for the community as it was winning over customers.

During the promotion, from May 1 to May 5, children aged 12 and younger ate for free and each received a "Cinco Kid" hot-pink and yellow chili-pepper hat. Through a drawing, adults had a chance to win a trip to Cabo San Lucas, catered party trays and gift certificates.

Throughout the week, there were dinner specials such as a beef taco, cheese enchilada and tostada for $3.95, and special prices on Mexican beers and margaritas. Customers could also do a Mexican Hat Dance, the Hokey Pokey or try to break a pinata for "Macayo Bucks"—certificates redeemable for food and drinks at the restaurant.

On the day of the holiday, Macayo held a tent party from noon until midnight. Entrance to the event was $1 or a can of food to be given to charity. Some of the activities for the tent party included a performance by Ballet Folklorico dancers, the making of paper flowers, a jalapeno-eating contest, the breaking of a pinata, a tortilla toss, a Mexican bean race and a dunking tank filled with non-alcoholic margaritas in which patrons could dunk local celebrities.

From 6 p.m. until midnight, only those aged 21 and older were admitted to the tent party, where they could learn new dance steps and try them out as a Salsa band played.

In addition to the festive theme, Macayo used the occasion to help the Scottsdale community. To begin the week of festivities, staff members volunteered to cook a traditional Mexican lunch for area homeless people at the St. Vincent de Paul Society dining room. A food and donation drive was also a success. "Over 700 cans and $3,000 were donated to the St. Vincent de Paul Society," says Sharisse Johnson, vice president of corporate communication for Macayo. "It gave us a chance to contribute to the community and the

Macayo Restaurants celebrated Cinco de Mayo—a national Mexican holiday—with a week-long series of specials, dancing, pinata parties and "Cinco Kid" hat giveaways for the kids.

homeless, and that's what made it such a special event," says Johnson.

Running a Cinco de Mayo promotion was also successful for Hat Dance, an upscale Mexican restaurant in Chicago that is part of Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises. Ed Culleeney, general manager of the restaurant, says that last year the staff decided to really play up the holiday and turn their upscale restaurant into a fiesta spot.

For the celebration the staff wanted Hat Dance to look like an explosion of color. "There is a raised area in the ceiling in the bar section, and we put about 1,000 balloons of all different colors with colored ribbons hanging down from them so when you looked up all these ribbons would be dangling over your head," says Culleeney. Employees also threw colored confetti all over the bar, hung authentic sombreros around the restaurant and had the waitstaff dress in bright, tropical wear or in Mexican costumes.

Marketing for the promotion included handing out little cards to customers with information about the event, and cards were mailed to other Lettuce Entertain You operations. Culleeney also bartered with a local Hispanic radio station, giving them gift certificates in exchange for small spots on the air.

The promotion ran for four nights, and the restaurant featured live bands each night. Customers were given a glass of champagne and free appetizers as they entered the restaurant for the celebration. Diners who found a gold coin under their table tents got a swing at a pinata hanging in the entryway to the dining room. The pinata was stuffed with gift certificates, T-shirts and candy. On the final night a Mexican folkloric group performed, and Hat Dance awarded a prize for two round-trip tickets to Puerto Vallarta.

"The event was very successful as far as letting the public know about Hat Dance and Cinco de Mayo; people weren't really aware of the holiday," says Culleeney. One of the hazards of running a fiesta, Culleeney found, was the pinata-breaking. "One guy missed the pinata and almost tore down the whole restaurant," he says with a laugh.

Bastille Day fireworks

July 14 is a national holiday in France, as people celebrate the storming of the Bastille prison on July 14, 1789. Annual promotions commemorating this holiday have had patrons storming the door at Pot au Feu in Providence, Rhode Island.

Robert and Ann Burke, who own this upscale French restaurant, began holding Bastille Day promotions in 1986. That first year, the drawing card was a free dinner for two—in Paris. This past year, Pot au Feu gave away 12 trips, some to Europe and others to destinations in the United States.

"We went to American Airlines the first year, presented our idea and told them how our restaurant attracts a well-to-do clientele: businesspeople, financial brokers, lawyers—people who travel a great deal," says Robert Burke. "We also told them that it was guaranteed exposure, with three months of in-house promotion, talked about one-on-one by our staff, plus they would piggyback on all our print promos. And they said, 'Great!' It was so easy, I was amazed. The first year was so successful that we upped the number of trips at their request."

Each diner is given an entry form to be entered into the drawing for the airline tickets. As an incentive to the service staff, Burke asks each server to initial every entry form their customers submit. If one of the server's customers wins the trip to Paris, then he or she wins two tickets to anywhere American Airlines flies in the United States.

As well as co-promoting the event with American Airlines, Burke also secured a local radio station as a co-promoter. In exchange for mentioning the station in all promotional material, the station gave Pot au Feu free spots advertising the Bastille Day event, and people could send postcards to the station to enter the contest as well.

On Bastille Day, Burke puts on a beret and visits the local radio stations toting a gift basket with croissants, champagne, a French flag and a fact sheet about Bastille Day and the restaurant's promotion. "I've found the media people are very willing to talk about any national holidays," says Burke. "The baskets are vehicles to get them to talk about the day. For instance, a disc jockey might say, 'I'm eating a croissant right now and the reason I am is that it is Bastille Day.' "

On the evening of Bastille Day, the restaurant holds a set-price champagne dinner for a limited number of customers, and Burke draws the name of one of the big prize winners for one of the European destinations. Burke says this promotion is easy and inexpensive, since the tickets and air time are free. He says he freed the restaurant from the travel-agent role by giving the customers round-trip tickets good for a year and by giving them $1,000 for dinner during the Paris trip. Winners can decide when and for how long they want to travel and how to spend the money.

Pot au Feu's Bastille Day promotion has been a success in more ways than one. "Summer is a slow time here; people go to the beach, and traffic is down. This increases our traffic and gives us a mailing list from the entry forms with 10,000 names—each and every one of them a customer," he says.

Burke says that deriving your mailing list from customers is a sounder practice than sending material out blindly because "it is easier to keep a good customer than it is to get a new one. The key is that you need the vehicle to tune people into what you are doing in your operation. Bastille Day has worked wonderfully for us. People enjoy celebrating holidays," says Burke.

The happy result of the promotion, according to Burke, is that even though the winners plan their trips themselves, they come back and thank Burke for their fantastic trip. "The great thing is that people can make the trip whatever they want it to be. If they want to go for a month or just a weekend they can do it. Each person can create their own fantasy trip, yet somehow we keep getting the credit for it—which is fine with me," he says. ❑

Jennifer Batty is a communications specialist at the National Restaurant Association.

#114

Talking with customers

Those of you who follow this column may recall two earlier Fisher's Laws, one entitled "Talking with the boss" and the later one "Talking with employees." In each piece I listed those things that the receiver of communication (i.e., the boss or employees) likes to hear—and what is not liked. It seems a natural extension now to identify those things that customers like to hear, as well as what they don't like to hear. Here is a sampling of both.

What customers like to hear

1. Hello! We're glad you're here!
2. Welcome! It's nice to have you with us.
3. Welcome back. It's nice to see you again.
4. That's an excellent choice. I recommend it.
5. Sure, we can do that for you.
6. Of course! Take your time. I'll check back with you in a few minutes.
7. We have some great specials today. May I tell you about them?
8. Let me check with the chef, but I'm sure we'll be able to accommodate your request.
9. The people who come in here are really great.
10. The people who work here are really great.
11. There's no extra charge for that.
12. Our desserts are really sumptuous.
13. Sure, I'll get that for you right away.
14. Would you care for some more _____?
15. I have your check right here.
16. Your table is ready right now.
17. Oh yes! We take major credit cards.
18. This is compliments of the house.
19. I'm so glad you like it. We receive a lot of compliments on it.
20. Sure, I'll be glad to change that.
21. Why thank you! I'll pass that along to the people in the kitchen.
22. I'd be happy to make a recommendation if you like.
23. That wine is an excellent choice to accompany your _____.
24. I'll be glad to get some extra _____.
25. Thanks for saying that. I enjoy working here. It's a fun place.
26. A lot of people tell us we offer good value. Thanks for noticing.
27. It's really an upbeat company.
28. You may want to consider our catering and home delivery services sometime.
29. I've really enjoyed being of service to you.
30. Thank you for coming.

What customers don't like to hear

1. OK! What do you want?
2. Sorry, it's not my station.
3. Substitutions are not allowed.
4. We're all out of that.
5. We're all out of that, too.
6. We don't take special orders.
7. I don't know! I'll have to check. I'll be right back.
8. Which one of you ordered this?
9. You'll have to order now, or I may not get back to you for a while.
10. Would you please hurry up, I don't have all day.
11. What's wrong with it? It looks OK to me.
12. Which one of you gets the check?
13. We only take cash.
14. Pass this over to your friend there.
15. You did too order this!
16. It's alright, but I wouldn't order it if I were you.
17. If you're all finished, thanks for coming. We need a table.
18. That has a lot of calories. Are you sure you want it?
19. Cool it! I only have two hands.
20. You look like big tippers.
21. It's supposed to be lukewarm.
22. I'll send the busperson over when I get a minute.
23. Whoops! Sorry about that!
24. Try a little soda water; that should take the stain out.
25. The chef just walked out.
26. The manager said not to make any recommendations. He said to say that everything is good.
27. It's the same special every day.
28. I'll have to charge you extra for that.
29. How do I know? I don't cook the food, I just serve it.
30. I'm not working here after this week.

Fisher's Law #114: The most important thing you wear to work is your smile. That, along with a sparkle in your eye, is the most important thing you can "say" to a customer.

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What's happening at casual tableservice restaurants?

A tighter economy and heightened value-consciousness among consumers continue to fuel demand for a casual, affordable, less structured dining experience at tableservice restaurants. A new National Restaurant Association study, Tableservice Trends: 1991, *shows that "casualization" of the industry is continuing as more restaurants take steps to strengthen their appeal to value-driven customers.*

In late 1990, the National Restaurant Association conducted surveys of both consumers and tableservice restaurant operators to investigate what has happened at tableservice restaurants since 1988—the last time similar surveys of consumers and tableservice operators were conducted.

Both the consumer and tableservice restaurant-operator surveys covered a wide variety of topics pertinent to tableservice restaurants, including casual dining, a trend that has become more prevalent in the restaurant industry since that time. The results of the surveys, published in a new association study, *Tableservice Trends: 1991*, indicate that the restaurant industry is continuing to respond to the growing interest in casual dining that was revealed in an association Gallup survey of consumers conducted in late 1989.

In that Gallup survey, half of those surveyed said they enjoyed eating at a casual restaurant more than eating at a fine-dining establishment. In contrast, 18 percent favored fine dining to casual dining and 23 percent enjoyed both types of establishments equally.

Although consumers rated both fine dining and casual dining equally in terms of the quality of the "overall experience" each provided, casual dining received a significantly higher rating in terms of providing value. In addition, casual establishments were preferred to fine dining by more than two in five consumers for dining out with children, having a Saturday-night treat with friends, and dining out with a spouse or friend instead of cooking at home.

The popularity of casual restaurants has been indicated by an increase in customer traffic. According to CREST* data for the year ending in August 1990, the casual-dining sector of the upscale segment reported a 5 percent increase in customer traffic. Over the same period, traffic rose a smaller 3 percent at quickservice restaurants, remained flat at midscale establishments and declined 5 percent at fine-dining upscale restaurants. Much of this traffic advance can be attributed to a 12 percent growth in

**CREST stands for* Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, *a diary survey conducted by the NPD marketing and research companies.*

Responses by tableservice restaurants to casualization trend, by per person dinner check,* 1990

Many tableservice operators have taken steps to "casualize" their establishments

	Percent of respondents taking the step since January 1989				Percent of respondents* who will take the step in 1991			
	Less than $8.00	$8.00 to $14.99	$15.00 to $24.99	$25.00 or more	Less than $8.00	$8.00 to $14.99	$15.00 to $24.99	$25.00 or more
Cut price of menu items	19%	15%	35%	30%	1%	3%	3%	2%
Added lower-priced menu items	46	48	59	52	3	7	5	0
Added easy-to-prepare dishes to menu	57	50	52	49	4	6	7	0
Added grilled dishes to menu	60	51	84	64	14	4	13	7
Added pasta dishes to menu	52	59	76	73	18	5	9	18
Added light entrees to menu	62	61	76	65	11	19	22	7
Offered a complete meal at a fixed price	75	62	59	58	3	4	15	12
Reduced average price for bottled wine**	2	15	17	16	1	0	1	3
Decreased protein component in entrees	16	14	18	15	3	2	4	1
Offered frequent-diner promotion	24	26	28	20	13	12	13	8

** includes only those respondents who did not implement the step since January 1989*
*** for those serving wine*

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Tableservice Trends: 1991*

traffic from customers between 18 and 34 years old.

Boosting casual appeal

The advance in casual-restaurant traffic combined with high consumer interest in more casual-dining experiences has led many tableservice operators to take steps to strengthen their appeal. The association's 1990 Tableservice Operator Survey shows that the "casualization" of the industry is continuing as more restaurants take steps to accommodate consumers seeking moderate prices and good value.

Slightly more than half of those tableservice operations with per person dinner checks of more than $15 report having added lower-priced items to their menus since January 1989. Slightly less than half of those with lower per person dinner checks have done the same. In addition, a complete meal at a fixed price, which many consumers consider to be a good value, is most likely to be offered at tableservice restaurants with a per person dinner check of less than $8. However, higher-check establishments are also using the fixed-price strategy, as survey results reveal that about six in 10 tableservice operators with higher dinner checks offer complete meals for a fixed price.

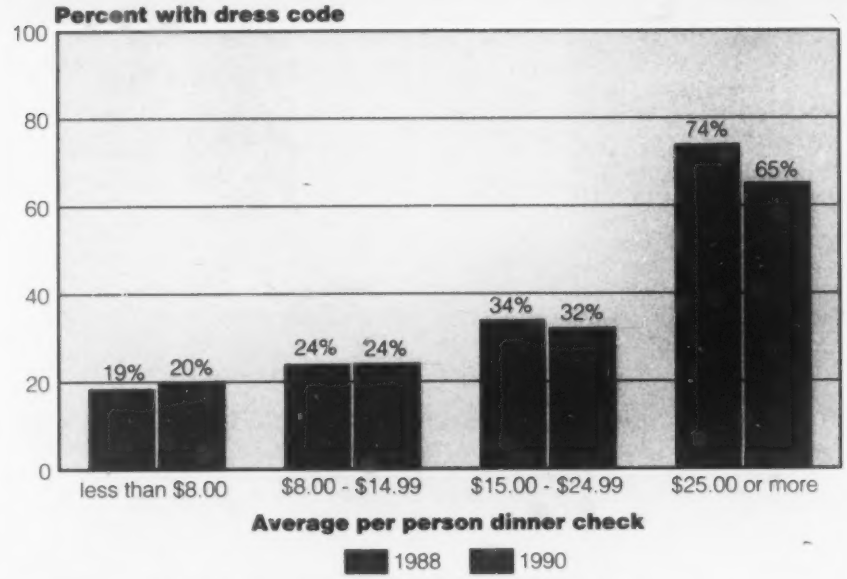
Among operations in the higher-check end of the tableservice business, about one-third report that they have actually cut prices on menu items. Fewer than one out of five operations with dinner checks below $25 per person have cut prices on menu items.

Another means of building traffic—offering a frequent-diner promotion—has also become more popular. A significant proportion of fine-dining respondents, those with per person dinner checks of $25 or more, indicated they are offering a frequent-diner promotion. This tactic is more often associated with more casual-dining establishments, as roughly 25 percent of operators surveyed with establishments that have per person dinner checks below $25 already have these promotions.

Some fine-dining places are also relaxing their dress codes, bowing to the casual dress favored by younger consumers. In 1990, 65 percent of operators surveyed with a dinner check of $25 or more per person had a dress code, compared with 74 percent in 1988. Fewer than one-third of establishments with dinner checks below $25 per person had dress codes in 1990.

Percent of tableservice restaurants with a dress code, 1988 and 1990

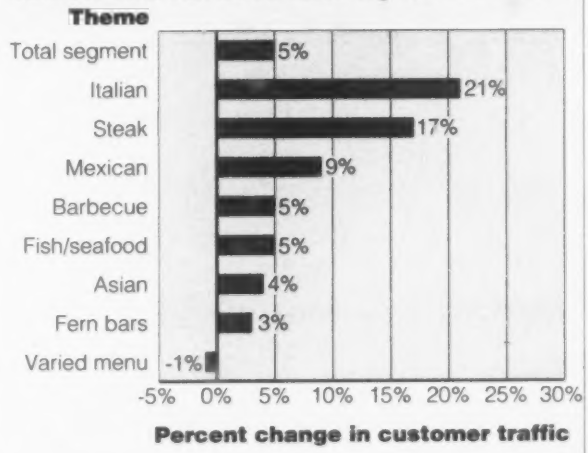
Dress codes have become less prevalent at higher-check tableservice operations



Source: National Restaurant Association, *Tableservice Trends: 1991*

Change in traffic at casual restaurants, for year ended August 1990

Casual Italian, Mexican and steak restaurants posted larger traffic advances than did the casual segment as a whole



Source: NPD CREST

Adding casual fare

Survey results indicate that a majority of tableservice restaurants have made menu changes associated with the casual-dining phenomenon. More than half of all tableservice operators surveyed have added light entrees, grilled dishes and pasta dishes to their menus since January 1989. Establishments with average dinner checks of $15 or more per person reported a higher incidence of adding these lower-cost, less labor-intensive options to their menus in the last year than have establishments with lower dinner checks.

Results of the association's 1990 menu analysis, an analysis of 50 menus

each from the association's 1985 and 1990 Great Menu Contests, reinforce the trend towards casual dining. Sandwich offerings, popular items at many casual restaurants, grew more dramatically in number than any other menu item—up 56 percent from 1985 to 1990. Pasta dishes more than doubled in number. Chicken breast entrees almost tripled in number, and casual combination meals such as sandwich/soup and salad/soup gained a stronger presence in 1990 as well. There was also a marked increase in the number of appetizers offered (up 25 percent). Appetizers sometimes stand in for an entree.

In addition to adding specific menu items, Tableservice Operator Survey results indicate that about half of those surveyed have added easy-to-prepare dishes to their menus since January 1989. These dishes may appeal to consumers interested in simple preparations of food and may help operators control costs.

What's ahead in 1991? Are operators who have not yet "casualized" their operations going to do so in the future? The Tableservice Operator Survey asked operators who had not reported making changes (such as lowering menu prices and adding menu items since January 1989) whether they would be making the changes in 1991. Survey results reveal that few who have not already taken steps plan to do so in the future.

Nevertheless, the results indicate that more will be trying frequent-diner promotions to build business in 1991. Moreover, the widespread appeal of light entrees, pasta and grilled dishes is confirmed, as significantly more tableservice restaurants will be adding these dishes to their menus in the year ahead.

—Nancy Michalski

Growth in the casual segment

While casual dining as a whole posted a 5 percent growth in customer traffic for the year ended August 1990 compared with the year ended August 1989, all segments did not grow equally, nor was the growth spurred on by the same customer groups, according to CREST data.

☐ *Italian.* Total traffic for casual Italian restaurants advanced 21 percent in the year ended August 1990—the largest advance among all types of casual restaurants. Although traffic grew 12 percent among adults between 18 and 34 years old, traffic grew more among adults between 35 and 49 years old (22 percent), 50 and 64 years old (31 percent), and among those 65 years old and older (28 percent).

☐ *Steak.* Traffic counts advanced 17 percent at casual steak restaurants for the year ended in August. Traffic among consumers between 18 and 34 years of age declined 11 percent, while counts among adults more than 35 years of age advanced—particularly among senior citizens.

☐ *Mexican.* Casual Mexican restaurants witnessed a 9 percent rise in customer traffic, ahead of the increase posted for the segment as a whole. This increase can be attributed to traffic advances for 18 to 34-year-olds (up 18 percent) and 50 to 64-year-olds (up 11 percent).

☐ *Barbecue.* Casual barbecue restaurants posted traffic gains on a par with those posted by all casual establishments—up 5 percent. Traffic grew the most among adults aged 65 and older (up 51 percent) and those between 18 and 34 years of age (up 25 percent). Customer counts declined among adults between 50 and 64 years of age (down 31 percent).

☐ *Fish/seafood.* Traffic at casual fish/seafood restaurants advanced 5 percent, a gain on par with total casual dining growth. Double-digit traffic advances were recorded among adults 65 and older (up 17 percent) as well as among those between 18 and 34 years of age (up 10 percent).

☐ *Asian.* Unlike other casual restaurants with an ethnic theme, casual Asian restaurants posted a smaller increase in traffic—up 4 percent. This more modest increase is a result of large traffic declines among 50 to 64-year-olds (down 13 percent), offsetting large traffic increases among 18 to 34-year-olds (up 17 percent) and senior citizens (up 11 percent).

☐ *Fern bars.* Fern bars recorded traffic advances of 3 percent for the year ending in August—slightly below growth posted by the casual segment as a whole. The growth in the segment was primarily driven by a 15 percent increase in traffic among 18 to 34-year-olds. Traffic among adults 35 and older declined.

☐ *Varied menu.* Varied-menu casual establishments were the only group to record a traffic decline—down 1 percent—for the year ended in August. Surprisingly, the decline was led by a drop of 7 percent in traffic from adults between 50 and 64 years old, combined with a 2 percent decline in traffic from adults between 35 and 49 years of age. Traffic from 18 to 34-year-olds (up 6 percent) and adults 65 and older (up 2 percent) increased.

Source: NPD CREST

To order the report

Tableservice Trends: 1991 is a compendium of results from the association's 1990 menu analysis, plus results from a Gallup consumer survey and a survey of tableservice restaurant operators. The report investigates the needs of tableservice-restaurant consumers and examines how various types of restaurants are responding to these needs. It includes a look at casual dining, nutrition concerns, tableservice features, alcoholic beverage service, customer satisfaction with service, and business conditions.

The report (CS505) is available to association members for $35 and to nonmembers for $70 (overseas orders require a 20 percent surcharge). All orders must be prepaid.

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Fine dining in the United States

U.S. fine-dining establishments are highly concentrated in a few metropolitan areas. It is likely that the number of fine-dining establishments peaked in 1987.

Fine-dining restaurants were prominent in the public eye in the 1980s. Yet fine-dining restaurants,* defined here as establishments with per person checks averaging $30 or more, numbered slightly more than 1,800 in 1987. These establishments accounted for only 1 percent of all tableservice restaurants. Nevertheless, their sales averaged more than $1 million each and totaled $1.9 billion, representing 3 percent of tableservice volume. In per capita terms, there were 134,800 U.S. residents for each fine-dining place.

Fine dining highly concentrated

Although 11 states had no fine-dining places with per person checks averaging $30 or more, four states (New York, California, New Jersey and Florida) had more than 100 each. Furthermore, these states accounted for more than half of all fine-dining restaurants in the United States and 61 percent of sales transacted at establishments with per person checks averaging $30 or more.

A somewhat different picture emerges when state population is taken into consideration by calculating the number of fine-dining places per capita. Two New England states heavily dependent on tourism, Vermont and New Hampshire, rank second and fourth in fine-dining establishments per capita. The District of Columbia ranks first, and New York—the leader in number of establishments—ranks third.

Even more revealing are data for metropolitan areas. Despite the fact that approximately one-third of all metropolitan areas had at least one fine-dining restaurant in 1987, most were concentrated in a few areas. Census data show that 31 percent of fine-dining restaurants were located in the New York consolidated metropolitan area, and these establishments accounted for 38 percent of sales for all fine-dining restaurants in the United States.

Fine-dining restaurants locate where their customers congregate. So it is no surprise that nearly half of them are situated in the country's four largest metropolitan areas, termed "world cities" by William H.

*includes tableservice restaurants categorized as eating places and excludes restaurants operated by other entities such as hotels

Top-ranked metropolitan areas for fine dining based on establishments per capita, 1987

Rank	Metropolitan area	Resident population per fine-dining establishment	Number of fine-dining establishments
1	Portsmouth-Dover-Rochester, NH-ME	11,300	19
2	Ft. Myers-Cape Coral, FL	22,700	13
3	Salinas-Seaside-Monterey, CA	26,400	13
4	NY, Northern NJ, Long Island, CT	31,900	566
5	Las Vegas, NV	46,200	13
6	Portland-Vancouver, OR-WA	55,300	25
7	Miami-Ft. Lauderdale, FL	55,700	53
8	West Palm Beach-Boca Raton-Delray, FL	56,400	14
9	San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, CA	63,300	94
10	Philadelphia-Wilmington-Trenton, PA, DE, NJ	70,100	84
11	New Orleans, LA	77,700	17
12	Honolulu, HI	83,100	10
13	Hartford-New Britain-Middletown, CT	88,100	12
14	Atlanta, GA	88,600	30
15	Washington, DC, MD, VA	91,200	40
16	Los Angeles-Anaheim-Riverside, CA	93,500	144
17	Chicago-Gary-Lake County, IL, IN	99,400	82
18	Sacramento, CA	95,400	14
19	Boston-Lawrence-Salem, MA, NH	110,600	37
20	Denver-Boulder, CO	116,300	16

Note: *Fine dining = per person check of $30 or more*
Source: National Restaurant Association analysis of *1987 Census of Retail Trade*

Number of tableservice establishments and sales by per person check average, 1987

Per person check average	Number of tableservice establishments in category	Percent of tableservice restaurants	Tableservice sales (in billions)	Percent of sales
Less than $7	100,519	65%	$32.0	48%
$7 to $14.99	44,344	27	24.5	37
$15 and more	11,858	8	9.9	15
$30 and more	1,806	1	1.9	3
Total	**154,721**		**$66.4**	

Source: *1987 Census of Retail Trade*, Bureau of the Census

Top 10 states based on number of fine-dining establishments, 1987

State	Number of fine-dining establishments	Sales (millions)
New York	465	$654.2
California	307	334.1
New Jersey	116	87.2
Florida	102	106.6
Pennsylvania	92	73.6
Illinois	82	92.3
Massachusetts	79	58.9
Texas	65	64.9
Michigan	42	39.8
Colorado	42	35.5

Note: *Fine dining = per person check of $30 or more*
Source: National Restaurant Association analysis of *1987 Census of Retail Trade*

Top 10 states based on number of fine-dining establishments per capita, 1987

State	Number of fine-dining establishments	Resident population per establishment
District of Columbia	29	21,400
Vermont	23	23,800
New York	465	38,400
New Hampshire	19	55,600
New Jersey	116	66,200
Nevada	15	67,100
Massachusetts	79	74,100
Colorado	42	78,400
Connecticut	40	80,300
California	307	90,100

Note: *Fine dining = per person check of $30 or more*
Source: National Restaurant Association analysis of *1987 Census of Retail Trade*

Frey in *Metropolitan America: Beyond the Transition*, published by the Population Reference Bureau. These areas—New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles—house a larger share of the nation's commercial banks, diversified financial companies, law firms, accounting firms and consulting services specializing in advertising and related activities. Strong growth in these advanced services throughout much of the 1980s—particularly in financial services—boosted fine-dining business.

Another indication of how their strong finance and trade positions in the international economy set these world cities apart from other large U.S. cities is the disproportionate share of fine-dining sales transacted there. Nearly 60 percent of fine-dining sales occurred in these four markets, although they account for only 18 percent of the U.S. population. In contrast, the remaining top 10 metropolitan areas in terms of population (Philadelphia, Detroit, Boston, Dallas-Ft. Worth, Washington DC and Houston) account for 10 percent of the population and 12 percent of fine-dining sales.

In retrospect, it is likely that the number of establishments in the $30 or more check-size category peaked in 1987. Considering the continuing effect that the October 1987 stock market crash has had on the financial-services sector of the economy, it is not surprising that many fine-dining places are repositioning to attract a broader clientele. (See accompanying article on casual dining.) Other factors limiting demand for fine dining include the 80-percent limit on business-meal deductibility and the impact of a maturing and increasingly value-conscious baby-boom generation—as well as the current recession.

Fine-dining meccas

Three relatively small coastal metropolitan areas that attract many tourists are the leaders when it comes to fine-dining restaurants per capita. Although the sluggish economy in New England may have had an impact on its ranking since 1987, Portsmouth-Dover-Rochester, NH-ME, a baby-boomer magnet, was the number-one metropolitan area in terms of fine-dining places per capita. Fort Myers-Cape Coral, FL, a magnet for the elderly, ranked second, followed closely by Salinas-Seaside-Monterey, CA.

Other metropolitan areas with a large number of fine-dining places per capita, although they are not especially populous, include Las Vegas and West Palm Beach-Boca Raton-Delray, FL. —*Susan Mills*

Tableservice restaurants by check size

Nearly two-thirds of all tableservice restaurants reported an average per person check size of less than $7 in 1987, making many of them price-competitive with the typical cafeteria or fast food place, where per person checks averaged $2 to $4.99 in 1987, according to recently released data from the Census of Retail Trade. Although these relatively inexpensive tableservice restaurants were responsible for nearly half of total tableservice sales, the next tier of restaurants—with moderate checks averaging $7 to $14.99—generated 37 percent of total sales.

A third tier of higher-check establishments, including fine-dining places, numbering fewer than 12,000 and accounting for only 8 percent of restaurants, was responsible for a disproportionate 15 percent of total sales.

A detailed analysis of check-size data for tableservice restaurants, fast food places and cafeterias from the *1987 Census of Retail Trade* has been prepared by the National Restaurant Association. This analysis includes state-by-state information on number of units, sales and per capita data as well as information for each metropolitan area.

Eating Places by Check Size (CS580) is available to members for $25 and to nonmembers for $50 (overseas orders require a 20 percent surcharge). All orders must be prepaid.

Send a check or money order to the National Restaurant Association Publications Department, 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. For credit-card orders, call the association's information service and library at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960 in Washington DC.

Alcoholic-beverage update

Virtually all measures suggest that alcoholic-beverage consumption is continuing its long-term decline. Nevertheless, recent National Restaurant Association research indicates that alcoholic beverages remain available at most tableservice restaurants with a per person check of $8 or more.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Economic Research Service, the average U.S. citizen (age 21 and older) in 1989 consumed a total of 38.9 gallons of alcoholic beverages, down 1.5 percent from 1988. The year 1989 marked the lowest per capita consumption of alcoholic beverages since the early 1970s.

USDA data reveal that in 1989 adults consumed an average of 33.7 gallons of beer, 3.0 gallons of wine, and 2.2 gallons of distilled spirits. By comparison, in 1981 per capita consumption averaged a higher 36.8 gallons of beer, 3.3 gallons of wine and 2.9 gallons of distilled spirits.

Distilled-spirits consumption was down in 1989 for the eleventh consecutive year according to USDA, while per capita wine consumption for 1989 registered its fourth consecutive annual decline. Beer consumption on a per capita basis has declined since 1986.

Restaurant consumption off

According to CREST, the incidence of ordering alcoholic beverages (beer, wine and cocktails) in restaurants has reflected consumers' lower consumption levels. In 1986, alcoholic beverages were ordered on 4.4 percent of eater occasions* in restaurants, but by 1989 these beverages were included on a slightly lower 4.0 percent of eater occasions.

The National Restaurant Association 1990 menu analysis** confirms that there has been less emphasis on alcoholic beverages. Among beverage mentions on menus, alcoholic drinks posted the largest drop, falling from almost one-third (31 percent) in 1985 to about one-quarter (26 percent) of all beverage items in 1990. Mixed drinks were off the most over this time period, with wine and beer mentions remaining relatively stable.

Per capita distilled-spirits consumption registered its eleventh consecutive annual decline in 1989.

Operations data from restaurants that participated in the National Restaurant Association Industry Operations Survey and reported data for two consecutive years provide additional insight into the changing alcohol-consumption patterns of patrons at full-menu tableservice operations. Although total sales at these establishments were up almost 5 percent in 1989, alcoholic-beverage sales advanced a lower 3 percent. When inflation is taken into consideration, this suggests a real decline in sales of alcoholic beverages at these full-menu tableservice establishments between 1988 and 1989.

In addition, the proportion of alcohol sales to total sales at full-menu tableservice restaurants declined from 22.1 percent in 1988 to 21.5 percent in 1989. Analysis of survey data shows that alcoholic beverages contributed a smaller proportion of total sales at establishments with higher average checks. For example, among establishments in which the average check per person was $15 or more, alcoholic-beverage sales accounted for 24.0 percent of total sales in 1989, down from 24.3 percent in 1988. At establishments with an average check of $10 to $14.99, alcohol sales contributed 21.1 percent of total sales in 1989, lower than for 1988.

Percent of tableservice restaurants serving alcoholic beverages that have specific alcohol awareness program, by dinner check size per person, 1990

Most tableservice restaurants have an alcohol awareness program

Type of program	Dinner check size per person: Less than $8.00	$8.00–$14.99	$15.00–$24.99	$25.00 or more
Server-training program	79%	83%	84%	91%
Alternative transportation for intoxicated customers	54	72	79	81
Written staff policy on what to do if a customer becomes intoxicated	62	62	63	71
Designated-driver program	29	30	30	35

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Tableservice Trends: 1991*

Census confirms slowdown

The *1987 Census of Retail Trade Merchandise Lines*

*An eater occasion is one meal eaten by one person.

**An analysis of randomly selected menus submitted to the National Restaurant Association's Great Menu Contest. Fifty menus were from 1985 entries, and 50 menus were from 1990.

presents additional data that indicate alcohol sales have been lagging. In 1987 retail sales of alcoholic drinks totaled $18.7 billion, up from $15.0 billion in 1982. This represents a 25.1 percent increase—but only about half the growth rate that occurred between 1977 and 1982.

Between 1982 and 1987, the Consumer Price Index for alcoholic drinks away from home advanced 29.6 percent, so real sales of alcoholic drinks through retail establishments during this time period actually declined about 4 percent.

Drinking places endured substantial real declines in alcoholic-drink sales between 1982 and 1987.

Examination of alcoholic-drink sales at eating places shows that these establishments posted sales of $11.1 billion in 1987, up more than 43 percent compared with 1982. Within the category of eating places, restaurants and lunchrooms captured sales of $9.8 billion, up almost 42 percent over 1982. Of particular note is the major growth between 1982 and 1987 of alcohol sales at "other eating places." This reflects the growing importance of contract foodservice and social caterers, within the eating-places category.

By comparison, drinking places in 1987 reported sales of $7.4 billion, up just 6 percent since 1982. Consequently, between 1982 and 1987, drinking places endured substantial real declines in alcoholic-drink sales.

Between 1982 and 1987, restaurants posted a real increase in alcoholic-drink sales of about 9 percent—still below the 15 percent real advance for meals and snacks. This fact suggests

More than 60 percent of tableservice restaurants that serve alcohol have a written policy on what to do if a customer becomes intoxicated.

Number of establishments offering alcoholic drinks, 1987

	Number of establishments
Eating places	108,272
Restaurants & lunchrooms	87,862
Fast food	17,030
Cafeterias	951
Other	2,429
Drinking places	58,692
Miscellaneous retail stores and other retailers	2,578
Total	**169,542**

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, *Census of Retail Trade, Merchandise Line Sales*, 1987

Alcoholic drink sales at eating and drinking places, 1982 versus 1987

Alcoholic-drink sales reached $18.5 billion in 1987

	1982	1987
Eating places	$7,775,439	$11,124,153
Restaurants & lunchrooms	6,951,048	9,840,984
Fast food	477,120	542,038
Cafeterias	29,367	38,766
Other	317,904	702,365
Drinking places	6,983,153	7,386,446
Total	**$14,758,592**	**$18,510,599**

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, *Census of Retail Trade, Merchandise Line Sales*, 1982 and 1987

Who drinks alcoholic beverages away from home?

A recent association consumer study, *Attitudes Toward Nutrition in Restaurants: Assessing the Market*, shows that 54 percent of adults in the United States report that they ever drink alcoholic beverages such as beer, wine or cocktails while away from home at a restaurant or eating place. Men are somewhat more likely to order an alcoholic beverage than women are.

Those ordering alcoholic beverages tend to be in higher income brackets. More than two out of three adults with annual household incomes of $40,000 a year or more reported ordering alcoholic beverages at restaurants, compared with slightly more than one out of three adults with household incomes below $20,000. Among those adults who ever drink alcohol away from home at restaurants or eating places, 38 percent indicated they are ordering alcohol less often than they have in the past.

Another association study, *Beverage Preferences*, investigated the popularity of 40 specific beverages, including beer, wine and cocktails, at restaurants. The most common explanations offered by consumers for ordering fewer alcoholic beverages than in the past was that they don't enjoy them as much anymore, as well as health reasons and concerns about drinking and driving.

Both studies are available for purchase. Contact the information services department for order information at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960.

that alcohol has become less important to consumers, even at tableservice establishments.

Census data show that at restaurants alcoholic drinks accounted for 21 percent of sales for establishments selling alcoholic beverages in 1987, down from 23 percent in 1982.

Alcohol availability

Despite the trend of lower alcoholic-beverage consumption, recent association research indicates that alcoholic beverages remain available at most tableservice restaurants where the per person dinner check is $8 or more.

According to the association's *Tableservice Trends: 1991*, 80 percent of tableservice restaurants with a $8 to $14.99 per person dinner check provide full beverage service, and more than 90 percent with checks of $15 or more serve beer, wine and distilled spirits.

Although fewer than three in 10 tableservice restaurants in which the per person dinner check is less than $8 offer full beverage service (including beer, wine and distilled spirits), more than four in 10 serve beer.

When it comes to responsible practices, more than eight out of 10 tableservice restaurants that serve alcoholic beverages report having a server-training program. Although the surveys are not strictly comparable, this figure is well above the 56 percent of association members serving alcoholic beverages that reported having a server training program in an earlier survey conducted in August 1988. Both surveys confirm that the likelihood that an establishment has a server-training program increases with an establishment's sales volume.

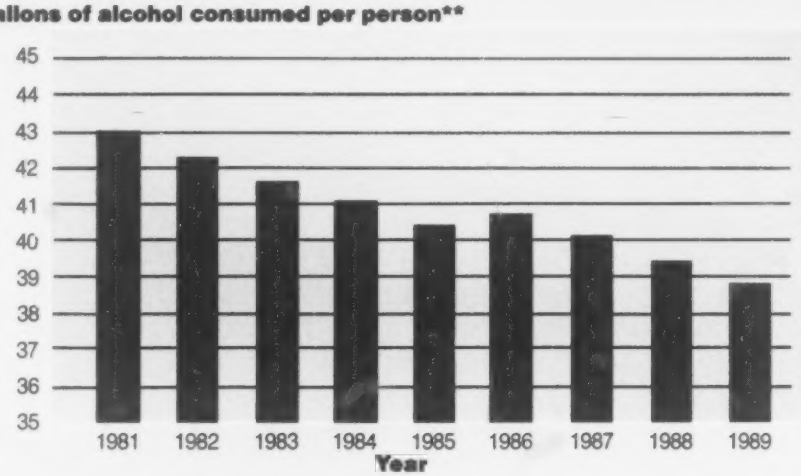
Nearly all tableservice restaurants that serve alcoholic beverages also offer nonalcoholic beverages such as soft drinks and bottled water. The majority serve nonalcoholic beer, wine and mocktails, too.

In addition, more than six out of 10 tableservice restaurants that serve alcoholic beverages report having a written staff policy on what to do if a customer becomes intoxicated. Approximately three out of four tableservice operators also indicate that they provide alternative transportation for intoxicated customers.

—Hudson Riehle

Per capita consumption of alcoholic beverages*

Per capita consumption of alcohol declined 10 percent between 1981 and 1989



*based on U.S. resident population 21 years old and older
**beginning in 1983, includes wine coolers

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, *Food Consumption, Prices, and Expenditures*, annual; and unpublished data.

Food and beverage sales as a percent of total sales* by average check size per person at full-menu tableservice restaurants

Alcoholic beverages' contribution to total sales declined, except at establishments with an average check under $5.00

Average check	Proportion of total sales, 1989	Percentage point change, 1988–89
Less than $5.00		
☐ Food	99.8%	+0.3%
☐ Beverage	3.3	+0.1
$5.00 to $9.99		
☐ Food	85.4	+1.0
☐ Beverage	18.2	−0.2
$10.00 to $14.99		
☐ Food	79.1	+0.7
☐ Beverage	21.1	−0.6
$15.00 and more		
☐ Food	76.0	+0.4
☐ Beverage	24.0	−0.3

* Median values; therefore, figures do not add to 100 percent. Figures are not intended to be representative of or set standards for the industry. Respondents providing two years of comparable data numbered 570.

Source: National Restaurant Association 1990 Restaurant Industry Operations Survey

Foodservice Market Measure—November 1990

As the unemployment rate crept upward to 5.9 percent in November 1990 and the country slid into recession, the proportion of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day declined to 46 percent after averaging 51 percent in the September/October period—as well as through the first six months of 1990.

Patronage at lunch, which 24 percent of adults reported purchasing away from home in November, continued to be off from the 30 percent average in the first half of 1990. In addition, the proportion of adults reporting that they patronized a foodservice establishment for dinner declined to its lowest level in 1990—as did patronage for breakfast.

After holding up fairly well in September and October, the proportion of adults who were on-premises patrons on a typical November day dipped to 32 percent, a significant decline from the 37 percent average through the first half of 1990. The proportion of adults who were on-premises patrons for lunch was 16 percent. On-premises dinner patronage by adults in November (12 percent) was at its lowest level in 1990.

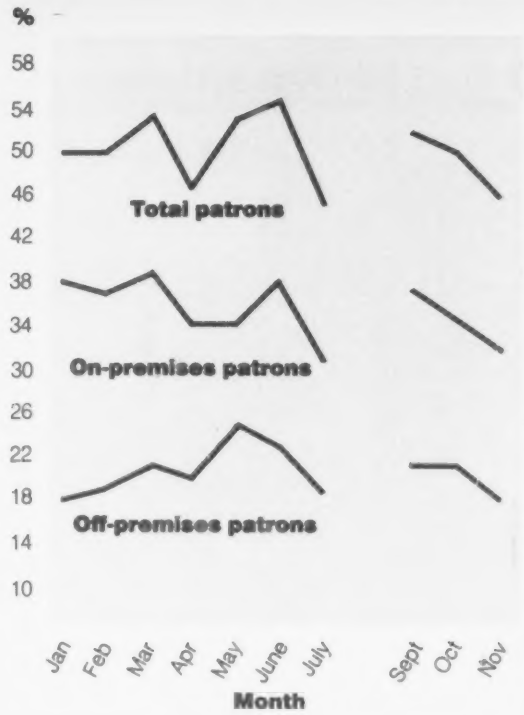
In contrast to the declines occurring for on-premises patronage, the proportion of adults purchasing from foodservice for takeout or delivery was not off by a significant amount.

Demographics

A look at demographics suggests that women were more likely than men to have cut back on their foodservice patronage. Forty percent of women were foodservice patrons on a typical November day, off significantly from the 47 percent average in the first six months of 1990. Older consumers, in the 55 to 64-year-old group, were also more likely than others to have cut back on eating out in November compared with earlier in 1990.

—Susan Mills

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons in 1990



Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey
Note: *Because of a Gallup error, there is no data for August 1990.*

Percent of adults who were patrons on a typical November 1990 day

	On-premises	Off-premises
Males	38%	19%
Females	26	17
Age		
18 to 24 years old	41%	25%
25 to 34 years old	32	26
35 to 44 years old	32	22
45 to 54 years old	35	15
55 to 64 years old	26	8
65 and older	24	5
Annual household income		
Less than $20,000	36%	21%
$20,000 to $39,999	31	21
$40,000 or more	27	12
Employed women	26%	18%
Women not employed	24	12

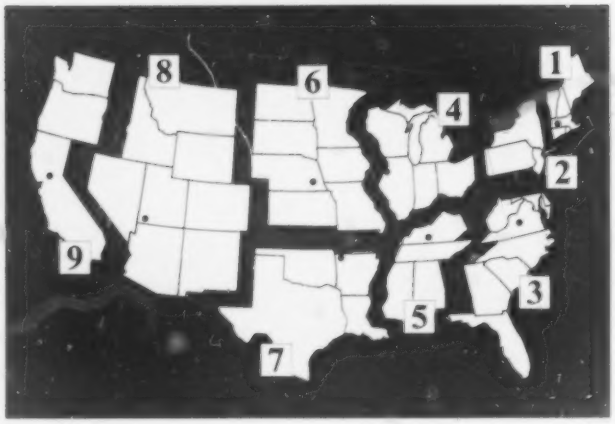
Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Foodservice Market Measure

The Foodservice Market Measure is based on 1,000 telephone interviews, conducted by the Gallup Organization each month, with a nationally representative sample of adults age 18 and older. Each person is asked the same questions:

1. Which of the following did you do yesterday?
☐ Ate on the premises of a restaurant, fast food place, cafeteria or any other place where you purchased a meal or snack.
☐ Purchased takeout food "to go" or had it delivered.
2. Was the food you ate on premises yesterday for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?
3. Was the takeout food you purchased or had delivered for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

The monthly tracking of purchases is supplemented by quarterly inquiries on topics of industry interest.



1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: Westfield, MA
Association member: Maggie Daley
Operation: The Good Table Restaurant
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 10 years
Seats: 74
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch

The Good Table Restaurant is holding its own, according to manager **Joe Daley.** "This area is not good—a lot of places are hurting, but we've built up a steady clientele and they've stuck with us," he says.

Daley's wife, **Maggie Daley,** is chef/owner of what she calls the "snazzy diner." She says the locals come in for the meat loaf, Hungarian goulash and chicken shortcake, a kind of pot pie. But her soups are the most popular items. Customers are also drawn in by the three daily specials priced between $4 and $5.

Limited hours of operation have helped the Daleys keep costs down. "Just serving breakfast and lunch helps lower operation costs. Also, Westfield was once a farm town, and the sidewalks still seem to roll up as the sun goes down, so there's no need for us to be open for dinner," says Daley.

2 MID-ATLANTIC

Location: Dexter, NY
Association members: Wendell and Rita Whitney
Operation: Wink's Reel 'Em In Restaurant
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 4½ years
Seats: 50
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

During the winter, business is somewhat slow for Wink's Reel 'Em In. The summertime brings tourists traveling through Dexter and avid fishermen hoping to land a big one along the banks of the Black River. Fishermen also hope to trade a few fish stories with the restaurant's namesake—**Wendell "Wink" Whitney.** Whitney is the cinematographer for "Rod and Reel," a nationally syndicated TV fishing show.

Rita Whitney, his wife, is co-owner and chef of the restaurant. Menu items include German dishes such as sauerbraten, knockwurst and Wiener schnitzel, as well as burgers, sandwiches and fish. "Part of the reason people stop by is to visit with my husband and to see the fish pictures and stuffed fish decorating the walls," says Whitney.

But don't plan on talking trout with the chef. "My husband likes to fish, but it's not for me," she says.

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Waynesboro, VA
Association member: Mary Roberts
Operation: Weasie's Kitchen
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 5 years
Seats: 67
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

"We're holding our own against last year," says bookkeeper **Carl Rohlfs.** In order to prepare for a slowdown, Rohlfs says Weasie's is cutting down on advertising and reducing the number of employees.

The restaurant features a full menu, including a Southern breakfast with eggs, sausage, ham and biscuits. The majority of business is made up of locals, but Weasie's also gets tourist traffic from Afton Mountain, where the Blue Ridge Mountains meet the Shenandoah Mountains. Located two miles from the intersection of interstates 81 and 64, the restaurant attracts people coming off the mountain after admiring the view of the valley below and the changing colors of the mountains.

4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Rock Island, IL
Association members: Therese and Rachid Boucharev
Operation: Le Figaro Restaurant
Profile: French restaurant
In business: 8½ years
Seats: 234
Meal served: Dinner

Business is fine at Le Figaro Restaurant, says co-owner **Therese Boucharev.** The restaurant is located in the downtown area and does not have much competition, she says. Her husband, **Rachid Boucharev,** is the co-owner and chef. Dishes such as chateaubriand and veal Oscar are popular with the local clientele.

The Boucharevs are running an early-bird special during the winter, a four-course dinner for $11.95. The restaurant, named after the French newspaper *Le Figaro*, also books private parties. Most of the customers are between the ages of 30 and 50, says Boucharev, and the check average is $20 to $25.

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Bowling Green, KY
Association members: Philip Wilson and Lon Durbin
Operation: Parakeet Cafe and Bar
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 7 years
Seats: 100
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

The Parakeet Cafe has found some increased competition lately, as a few new restaurants opened in the area and another operation expanded. "We don't have a waiting area here," says co-owner **Philip Wilson.** "If people have to wait, they have to stand in the foyer and it gets crowded. So people are exercising their options and going to other places." Even with the new competition, Wilson says the operation is doing fairly well.

Wilson operates the cafe with his partner, chef **Lon Durbin.** Durbin prepares American bistro-style food, including sauteed veal with sea scallops, and trout sau-

teed with mushrooms and artichoke hearts. "Our most popular dish was the steak filet with artichoke hearts and bearnaise sauce. But we had trouble with the health department because of the eggs, so we had to take it off the menu," says Wilson. After consulting with their lawyer, Wilson and Durbin may be able to reinstate the dish if they add a disclaimer to the menu about the bearnaise sauce.

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Lincoln, NE
Association member: Harvey Shoemaker
Operation: Shoemaker's Restaurant
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 22 years
Seats: 155
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Shoemaker's business is up compared with a year ago, according to manager **Jeff Hulbert.** "We're a truck stop. Even though truck traffic is down, we get a lot of travelers, so there hasn't been a decrease in business," says Hulbert.

Shoemaker's does 65 percent of its business in breakfasts, serving omelets, hotcakes and fresh items from their bakery. The menu includes a special trucker's section with 22 items of above-average portion size. Hulbert also offers six light meals. "There has been a slight increase in interest in nutritious meals. I'd say we're about a year away from incorporating a heart-healthy menu. But most of our customers are still meat-and-potato types," he says.

The restaurant's decor features gas memorabilia. There are gas pumps from 1919 to 1936, 200 different gas globes with various gas-company logos and a Model-T car in the hallway. Collecting gas memorabilia is one of owner **Harvey Shoemaker**'s hobbies, says Hulbert.

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Eureka Springs, AR
Association member: Ned Shank
Operation: Dairy Hollow House
Profile: Country inn and upscale restaurant
In business: 9 years
Seats: 46
Meal served: Dinner

Last year was the start-up year for the restaurant at the Dairy Hollow House. This year business is up to twice as much, says co-owner **Ned Shank.** Shank's background in historic preservation prompted him to renovate an 1880s farmhouse into a two-room bed-and-breakfast. He and his wife, co-owner and chef **Crescent Dragonwagon,** began serving dinner to guests in 1983 in the small dining room that seated eight. The inn has since expanded to two buildings with six guest rooms and a dining room that can accommodate local diners as well as guests.

Guests of the inn get breakfast delivered in a basket to their rooms each morning. Breakfast is included in the price of the room, but dinner is extra. Shank says if they don't receive any reservations, they close the restaurant for the night. "We call our food 'Nouveau 'Zarks,' because we are in the Ozarks and we serve nouvelle cuisine. We use fresh, local, regional products whenever we can and make everything in our own kitchen," he says.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Springdale, UT
Association members: Stan, Ken and Mike Smith
Operation: Bumbleberry Inn
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 19 years
Seats: 200
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

The Bumbleberry Inn is located next to Zion National Park and is packed from May through September. Then comes winter. "This time of the year is really bad," says co-owner **Stan Smith.** "The park gets about 2 and a quarter million people each year. We do about 1,000 to 2,000 covers a day [in summer], but now—if we get five tables a day we're happy." Smith and his two brothers, **Ken** and **Mike,** operate the inn, which includes a 24-unit motel, gift shops, craft shops and the Pioneer Museum, displaying antique equipment and memorabilia of the Old West.

The inn's name was derived from the restaurant's claim to fame—the Bumbleberry Pie. "We have built our reputation on our Bumbleberry pies and jellies. People come over from Germany and France and tell us people told them to come here just for the pie," says Smith. Legend at the inn has it that the pies were so named because a waitress working there was tired of people asking her what was in the pie, so she jokingly said, "Bumbleberries."

"For a while we were telling people how the pie was made, but then we found other restaurants were serving their version of the Bumbleberry pie," says Smith. "Now we simply tell people that the pies are made from burple binkle berries that grow on a giggle bush."

9 PACIFIC

Location: Sacramento, CA
Association members: Bill and Denise Dalton
Operation: The Fox and Goose Public House
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 16 years
Seats: 120
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch

"We're doing very well. Of course we do see the effects of the economy. We see more bounced checks now, but they are still being covered," says co-owner **Denise Dalton.** Dalton operates the restaurant along with her ex-husband, **Bill Dalton,** and son **Stephen.**

The Fox and Goose is located in a 1913 building close to the capitol. The inside of the operation gives the feeling of a cheery English pub, with dartboards, English memorabilia and pictures, 23-foot ceilings and pebble-glass windows. At night the restaurant offers beer, wine and live music. "We're the only bar that has true folk music. We also have jazz and blues," says Dalton.

"We feature vegetarian items on both the breakfast and lunch menus. I'm a vegetarian myself, and we have found that people are ordering vegetarian food more and more," says Dalton.

—Jennifer Batty

Fun with food

Food is no longer something to please the palate alone. Far from avoiding the classic parental warning about playing with their food, children and adults alike are digging in with both hands.

Few staples have escaped the playful trend. Cereals, once packaged as flakes and pops, are now also available as teddy bears and Hot Wheels cars. Pasta, traditionally twisted into spirals and bows, is now molded into dinosaurs and space creatures. The "fun food" of the moment is "Mud"—a flowerpot filled with chocolate pudding "dirt" riddled with gummy "worms" and served with a plastic "shovel."

Even restaurants are beginning to play games. At Lambert's restaurant in Sikeston, Missouri, diners are encouraged to relax and have fun with their meal: Servers throw rolls at customers and then ladle on loads of honey, forcing diners to lick their fingers.

—Los Angeles Times

Grinding to the coffee beat

From the days of ancient monks to the years of the Beat Generation, coffee has defined unique cultures and nearly created some of its own. It's doing so again in Texas. As today's fast-paced generation turns toward a slower sip of life, coffee—and coffeehouses—are percolating to new strength.

Coffeehouses, home to many a counterculture movement in the past, have sprung up in Houston, Austin and Dallas, offering not only an alternative beverage but experimental sounds, eclectic verse and forums for discussion on just about anything. The accent is on inspiration and introspection, not on processing customers and checks. The servers slow the pace accordingly, and patrons linger as long as they please.

The beans themselves are eclectic as well, coming from as far away as Spain and Ethiopia, and are served in an array of strengths and flavors.

—Texas Monthly

Healthier brew for the college crew

College students these days are quenching their thirsts with healthier libations: fruit juices, bottled waters and sparkling juices.

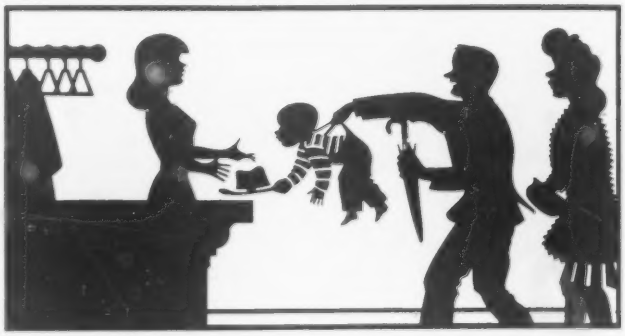
According to a recent survey conducted by Everfresh Inc., a fruit-beverage maker based in Franklin Park, Illinois, student respondents drank an average of 14 servings of fruit juice, bottled water or sparkling juice per week—nearly four servings higher than for soda and six servings higher than for beer, often assumed to be the preferred beverage among the college crowd.

The survey polled 600 students on three different campuses—Syracuse University, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Of this group, 70 percent reported that concern about sugar and preservatives affected their beverage choices, 79 percent claimed all-natural ingredients affected their decision, and 54 percent said they were now more likely to choose a nonalcoholic beverage in a social situation.

In addition, nearly 70 percent of students surveyed reported that they exercise on a regular basis, indicating a broader overall commitment to health and fitness.

—Everfresh Inc.

Kid check



At Denver's A Piece of Quiet restaurant, diners can now check their coats, their hats and their children.

The 30-seat fine-dining establishment developed the idea of "kid check" to accommodate the growing number of professionals who are now parents but are used to eating out on a regular basis. Patrons can take their kids along and still enjoy a fine meal and a true "piece of quiet."

The restaurant has separate entrances for adults and their pint-sized companions. While parents enjoy gourmet dining on one side, children savor their own favorite fare on the other, such as peanut butter sandwiches and pizza, as well as nightly entertainment—all under the watchful eye of an adult staff member. For nervous moms and dads, there's a one-way mirror so parents can peek in every now and then.

A Piece of Quiet's child-care center accommodates up to 25 children and costs patrons $3.50 per hour.

—Food Arts

YOUR
RECIPES
STACK
UP?
Take advantage of the
National Restaurant Association's
nutrient analysis service and find out
Nutrition is important to customers.
Show customers you care by knowing what's in your food.
Call the Information Service department at 800 424-5156
for more information and an order form.

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION VOL. 11 □ NO. 3 □ MARCH 1991

RESTAURANTS USA

We're glad you're here!

FRANCHISES ROLL OUT NEW IDEAS

ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

SEMINARS

Seminars scheduled during the National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show

Two-day seminar (5/18–5/19)
SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation
(Two-day, 16-hour certification course; deadline for registration is May 1.)

Saturday, 5/18
Full-day seminars
Banquet Management
Dining Room Management
Food Cost Management
Profitability
NEW! SERVSAFE/Responsible Alcohol Service

Half-day seminars
Kitchen Management
NEW! Legal Issues for Foodservice Operators
Promoting Your Restaurant
NEW! Service that Sells
The Labor Issue
NEW! Train-the-Trainer

Sunday, 5/19
Full-day seminars
Food Cost Management
Kitchen Management
Profitability
SERVSAFE/AFS Train-the-Trainer
Successful Buffet Management

Half-day seminars
Dining Room Management
Promoting Your Restaurant
Service that Sells
NEW! Stress Management
Theft Control

For further information on Show seminars, contact the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association, 250 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60606, or call (800) 765-2122; in Illinois, call (312) 715-1010.

EXECUTIVE STUDY GROUP SERIES

Internal Audit
3/19–22 San Diego, CA

Tax Executives
4/2–5 Coronado, CA

Financial Officers
4/3–5 Coronado, CA

Quality Assurance
4/24–26 Monterey, CA

Management Information Systems
4/16–19 Santa Fe, NM

Environmental Affairs Officers
4/3–5 Boston, MA

Marketing Executives
5/15–18 Chicago, IL

MAECO
5/15–17 Chicago, IL

Foodservice Purchasing Managers
5/16–17 Chicago, IL

International Development Executives
6/12–14 San Francisco, CA

For more information on specific study groups, contact Philip Kralovec at (312) 853-2525

The Executive Study Groups present semi-annual professional development programs for executives who would like to meet with their industry peers to share ideas and concerns. Executives in each of the aforementioned disciplines from member foodservice companies are welcome and encouraged to participate.

Note: *A new study group focusing on international development is currently forming. Any persons interested in participating in this group are encouraged to contact Philip Kralovec.*

COURSES AND BOOKS AVAILABLE

Certification Courses
Applied Foodservice Sanitation (AFS)
Applied Foodservice Purchasing
Controlling Costs in Foodservice
Effective Foodservice Marketing
Foodservice: A Managerial Approach
NEW! Foodservice Management Accounting
Foodservice Supervision: Achieving Success Through People
Introduction to the Foodservice Industry/
Introduction to Foodservice Management
Legal Aspects of Foodservice Management
Management by Menu
NEW! Managing Foodservice Facilities and Equipment
Managing Quantity Food Operations
NEW! Nutrition for the Foodservice Manager
NEW! Principles of Professional Cooking

Self-Development Courses
Protecting Restaurant Profits: Managing Security
Effective Communication
Managing People
Restaurant Operations and Control
Restaurant Purchasing
Bar and Beverage Management
Helping People Grow
Service: Managing the Guest Experience

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RESTAURANTS USA

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Senior Director Jeffrey R. Prince
Editor (on leave) Sylvia Rivchun-Somerville
Acting Editor Paul Moomaw
Managing Editor Melanie A. Crosby
Staff Contributors
Jennifer Batty
Elizabeth Gordon
Robert E. Harrington
Larry Hirnelfarb
Philip Kralovec
Andrew McLauchlin
Nancy Michalski
Susan Mills
Anne Papa Curtis
B. Hudson Riehle
Denise Roach
Linda Way
Diane Welland
Art Direction
Magazine: Tom Bellucci
Covers: Richard Earle, Liz Dalgetty
Administrative Assistant Susan Kessler
Editorial Secretary Ronda Bowers
Word Processing Operator Agnes Harkins
Intern Zari Malsawma

Editorial office and association headquarters 1200 Seventeenth St., N.W. Washington DC 20036-3097 (202) 331-5900
Chicago office 150 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2000 Chicago, IL 60601 (312) 853-2525

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Michael E. Hurst, owner
15th Street Fisheries, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Bumpers goes to bat for minimum-wage exemption

Senator Dale Bumpers (D-AR), chairman of the Senate Small Business Committee, is working to generate support on Capitol Hill for restoration of the small-business exemption to the minimum wage. Bumpers is the lead sponsor of S. 349, the bill that would ensure that eligible small businesses are exempted from the federal minimum wage law, as Congress had originally intended.

According to minimum-wage legislation passed in 1989, businesses were to be exempted from federal wage law if they grossed less than $500,000 per year. But because of a certain condition in the bill—that any employee who engages in interstate commerce must be covered by federal wage law—many of the businesses that should have been exempted were not.

If this problem is not corrected by April 1, 1991, small businesses will be hurt even more when the new federal minimum wage increases to $4.25. Show your support for S. 349 by calling or writing your senators and representatives.

EEOC asks association to pass the word

Representatives of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) met with members of the National Restaurant Association in February to discuss sex discrimination in restaurant hiring practices. The EEOC representatives said that they have received a number of complaints about discrimination against female employees and female job applicants in fine-dining establishments.

At the recent EEOC meeting, representatives stressed that they want to educate operators about the law and hope to avoid targeting restaurants for enforcement. They asked the association to pass the word on to operators to learn about the law and adhere to its guidelines before EEOC intervention is required.

1991 Legal Problem Solver available

To help operators with issues such as sex discrimination and other legal questions, the association is offering a newly revised version of the *Legal Problem Solver for Foodservice Operators*. Prepared by the association's legal counsel, this publication is a good guide to the regulations governing foodservice operations. For more information, refer to the back cover of this issue of ***Restaurants USA.***

Food Media Conference

On February 14, a presentation was made to 100 food editors and other reporters at the International Food Media Conference in Dallas. Key elements of the presentation drew attention to efforts by restaurateurs to provide more casual dining options and the tremendous efforts of fast food operators to meet the increased demand for nutritional menu items. Last year, the editors and writers who attended the event produced 600 articles based on the information received at the conference, and this year's audience seemed very receptive to the topics discussed.

Board visitation program

During the last year, board members have been encouraged to come to Washington DC to meet one-on-one with their congressional representatives. About 10 board members have already been to Washington and had productive meetings with members of Congress.

These appointments are scheduled by the government affairs department at the association's headquar-

ters in Washington, and a lobbyist usually accompanies the association board member as he or she meets with congressional leaders to emphasize our industry's stance on key legislative issues. Meetings are sometimes arranged with freshman members of Congress so that they may be introduced to our industry. This program has had positive results so far, and I hope that it is carried on throughout the next year.

Gearing up for the Show

The association is busy preparing for the 72nd annual National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show to be held May 18–22 at Chicago's McCormick Place. This year's Show will feature more than 1,900 exhibitors and 100,000 attendees from across the United States and abroad.

Exhibitors will display the latest in foodservice products, equipment and services on four huge floors, making the Show the place to catch all the latest innovations. A new exhibit this year will be The Hotel Collection, a display area that will feature hotel and motel exhibitors. Other exhibits include Illinois Avenue, the Seafood Center, and Wine and Spirits Way.

Radio and television personality Larry King will be the special guest speaker at the opening-day program, and from that point on, the Show will offer attendees a host of exciting events. Also on the schedule are the Salute to Excellence Reception and Dinner, the Salute to Excellence Forums, educational seminars, the Main Course 10K race, the American Culinary Classic and many other events.

Be sure to return your Show registration form soon. For more information about the Show, call our Chicago office at (312) 853-2525.

Educational foundation to hold show seminars

On May 18 and 19, during the Show in Chicago, the educational foundation will hold a number of convenient educational seminars on foodservice issues. Some of the topics covered will include food safety, employee motivation, staff training, operational costs, responsible alcohol service and legal issues.

Full and half-day seminars will be offered so that interested persons may attend more than one seminar. Check the inside front cover of the magazine for a complete schedule. For more information about Show seminars, contact the foundation's customer service department at (800) 765-2122.

We welcome the 72 new members who joined the association last month. We hope to meet you at the Show in May and share our common interest in making our industry even stronger in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Hurst

Michael E. Hurst
President and Chairman of the Board

FRANCHISES ROLL OUT NEW IDEAS

Restaurant franchises are looking to innovative technology and organizational strength to define future growth.

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19 How fast should a franchise grow?
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24 A chef's condiment primer
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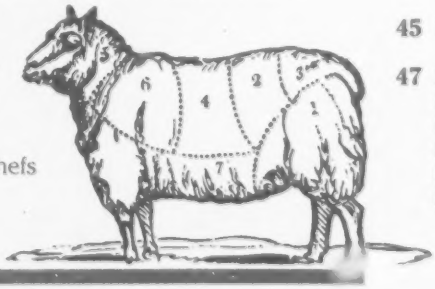
32 Cooking with low-cost cuts of meat
Cheaper cuts win top marks for flavor and help chefs cut food costs to the bone.



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Front cover photo by Gary Landsman. Back cover photo by Mark Wieland.

Fighting birth defects with pizza

Middleby Marshall, a Chicago-based manufacturer of conveyor ovens, recently hosted the first annual "Best Pizza in Town" contest on behalf of the March of Dimes. In addition to baking dozens of delicious pies, participants raised $22,000 to help fight birth defects in the Chicago area.

Although results of the Best Pizza contest were hardly conclusive, Beggar's Pizza and Jailhouse Pizza tied for first-place honors in the small independent category, as judged by a panel of industry experts and March of Dimes youth ambassadors. "There's talk by the March of Dimes people of rolling out this event nationally," says Middleby Marshall's David Jennings. In all, 11 dough-slinging pizzerias squared off in the Chicago competition.

Chicago pizza makers competed for "Best Pizza in Town" honors in a contest to help raise money to fight birth defects.

Help prevent infant drownings

The five-gallon container you took home from the restaurant may be a source of danger to an infant.

In the past five years, more than 100 small children have drowned after falling into industrial-sized buckets containing water or other liquids. In a typical bucket-related drowning, someone is using a bucket of liquid for a household chore. When the bucket is left unattended, a toddler approaches the bucket and falls in.

The newly formed Coalition for Container Safety is spreading information about the problem and is making warning stickers and brochures available. Industrial containers are commonly used in the foodservice industry for products such as condiments and soaps. Operators may obtain the warning sticker and brochure by contacting the Coalition for Container Safety at (800) 282-5385.

AVOID THE DANGER

Time to think Show

May 18 through 22 are the dates for this year's National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show. Restaurateurs and other foodservice professionals should begin now to make plans to attend this year's Show at McCormick Place in Chicago.

At the heart of the Show are the 1,900 exhibitors who will cover four huge floors of the McCormick Place Convention Complex. These exhibitors offer operators a chance to see the latest in product innovations, food products and services. Everything from exotic seafood to computer systems will be on display for restaurant operators to sample and discuss.

The annual Show is also a time for educational seminars, evening entertainment and even a popular 10K race. For more details about this year's big event, contact the association's Show office in Chicago at (312) 853-2525.

The 72nd National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show will be held May 18–22, 1991, at Chicago's McCormick Place.

The American Culinary Classic pits top chefs from 16 nations against one another in spirited competition. Show attendees watch the masters at work through glass-enclosed kitchens.

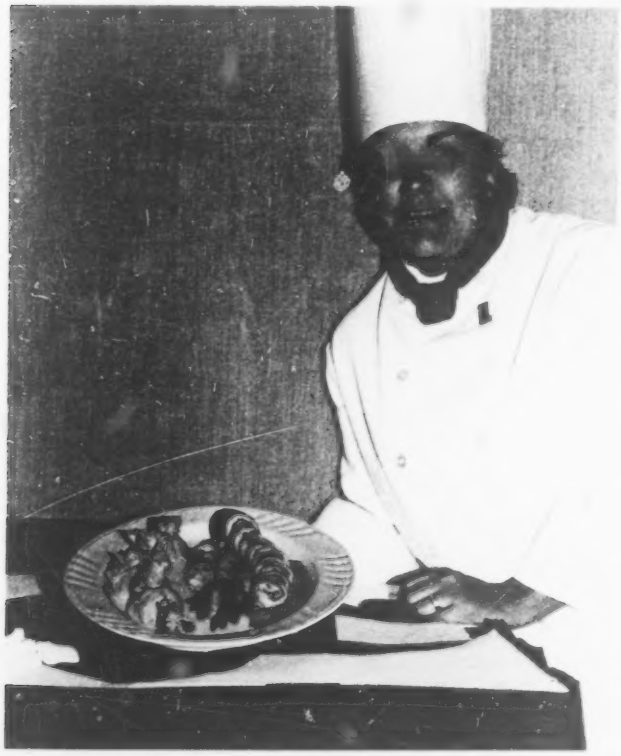
Culinary Team USA apprentice tryouts

The 1992 Culinary Team USA is presently holding tryouts for 25 apprentice positions. Tryouts have already been held in Tampa, Florida; Portland, Oregon; and Dallas, Texas. An additional regional tryout will be held April 13 through 15 in Stamford, Connecticut. Competitors are tested on knowledge of basic cooking skills as well as the ability to follow directions.

Apprentices to the Culinary Team USA will attend practice sessions and international competitions, beginning with the American Culinary Classic in Chicago this May and culminating with the "Culinary Olympics" to be held in Frankfurt, Germany, in October 1992.

Each apprentice will be matched with a Culinary Team USA team member. "This is a great opportunity for a future culinarian," says Keith Keogh, CEC, team manager and executive chef at Walt Disney World's EPCOT Center. "The first-hand experience gained through the association with our nation's best chefs helps advance their career prospects."

According to international rules established by the World Association of Cooks Societies, apprentices are allowed to accompany international culinary teams for up to one year after graduation. For more information, contact the 1992 Culinary Team USA headquarters at (407) 560-7318.



Qualifying apprentice Angel Smith is pictured with her cold food plate at the Tampa tryouts for Culinary Team USA apprentices.

May we ask a favor?

The association's information service and library (ISAL) receives many inquiries about job descriptions and written forms for foodservice operations. The ISAL would like to refresh its supply and develop an up-to-date file of these items to make available to members on request. To do so, we need your help.

The ISAL requests that members send samples of forms for scheduling, purchasing, food and beverage cost control, inventory, reservations and other procedures to ISAL Forms, National Restaurant Association, 1200 17th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. Also requested are examples of job descriptions for all foodservice positions. For more information, call (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960 and ask for Kate Riley or Larry Himelfarb.

FEEDBACK

Raw egg on our faces

The December 1990 issue of ***Restaurants USA*** featured an article and recipe about the popular Italian dessert tiramisu ("Tiramisu" by Leslie Pietrzyk). The recipe called for the use of uncooked egg yolks—which may be unsafe.

The National Restaurant Association and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration have warned restaurateurs in recent months that changes should be made in the handling of eggs to guard against potential contamination from *Salmonella enteritidis (S.e.)*. Shell eggs have been implicated in recent outbreaks of *S.e.* Consequently, the National Restaurant Association recommends that commercially pasteurized eggs or egg products be substituted for raw eggs in menu items that will not be thoroughly cooked, such as tiramisu, Caesar salad and hollandaise sauce.

For more complete information about new recommendations for the proper handling of eggs, see the November 1990 issue of ***Restaurants USA*** ("FDA puts eggs on its 'potentially hazardous' list"). For answers to specific questions, call the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Meat and Poultry Hotline at (800) 535-4555 or (202) 447-3333.

Address your comments about ***Restaurants USA*** and current foodservice issues to: ***Restaurants USA*** Feedback, National Restaurant Association, 1200 17th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. Submissions may be edited for length.

An earth-friendly franchisee

Like many restaurant franchises, Burger King is committed to environmentally sound practices. But the reasons for the success of its earth-friendly initiatives come not only from corporate leadership but also from the efforts of hundreds of franchisees who own and operate individual restaurants.

In Michigan, Stuart P. Ray, owner of a Grand Rapids–based franchise company that operates 19 Burger King stores, is one of those franchisees who makes a difference. "Environmental initiatives should not be left only to the industry giants," says Ray, who began his Burger King career at the grill of a Holland, Michigan, store while a business student at nearby Hope College. "We must work together to solve the problem. Every business can be part of the solution."

Doing his part

Although the Burger King national office proposes many of the restaurants' environmental policies (such as packaging changes and recycling requirements), Ray believes that individual operators must get involved as well. Franchisees, he says, can make an impact in their own cities and towns by simply looking at the buying decisions they make, the services they control and the ways they collect and dispose of waste locally.

Ray's franchise company has adopted the slogan "Earth Friendly, Doing Our Part" to publicize its dedication to such efforts and to promote its campaign.

Stuart Ray's earth-friendly program includes recycling plastics. The restaurants rely on customers to separate plastic items such as lids and straws from other disposables.

But a slogan and promotions alone do not make a winning environmental program. Interest, involvement and action are what count. "You can't buy consumer trust with dollars," says Ray. "Actions speak louder than words."

Ray's Burger King enterprise is committed to action. He assigned one person to head the company's environmental program and to see that ideas are carried out. A district manager with a personal interest in environmental issues handles those responsibilities. The program leader works closely with employees, vendors and customers to develop new strategies, and he offers his store for test programs.

The "Three Rs"—Reduce, Reuse and Recycle—are central to the franchisee's earth-friendly campaign. In-store processes and product use are examined carefully, and changes are made cautiously and gradually. "Before sinking large expenditures into a recycling program, test it on a small scale," Ray cautions other operators.

Ray's franchise company recycles paper at both its corporate offices and in Burger King restaurant kitchens. Ray estimates that more than 100 trees per month are saved from this effort alone.

Ray is committed to the recycling of plastics, too. Most stores contain plastics-only recycling bins so that customers can separate their plastics—such as lids and straws—from biodegradables and disposable paper. Another in-store recycling program is being tested in four of Ray's units and should be implemented in all 19 units in 1991. Ray has even found ways to expand some national office policies. For instance, although packaging standards are set by corporate headquarters, customers in his units have the option to have their burgers served without any packaging at all.

Beyond the restaurant

Although Ray's earth-friendly efforts are concentrated on restaurant operations, he also reaches out to the community in a variety of ways. Ray works with the Kent County Resource Recovery program to promote drop-off sites for recyclable materials throughout the area. In addition, through the Michigan Department of Transportation's Adopt-a-Highway program, Ray's employees have adopted a 20-mile stretch of roadway for which they are responsible for picking up trash during the next two years. And in April of 1990, in celebration of Earth Day, Ray's Burger King restaurants gave away nearly 13,000 trees, infusing the local environment with a vibrant touch of green.

Ray's franchise is as dedicated to ecological education as it is to sound restaurant practices, especially at the elementary-school level. Such involvement offers a chance to inform students about environmental issues as they study other subjects. The company already sponsors programs such as "Royal Reader" and "Free Lunch with the Principal," which reward students with food coupons as they attain their academic goals. Ray also promotes the Waste Information Series, an educational program created in cooperation with the Michigan Department of National Resources and the Department of Education. The series includes lesson plans, hands-on activities and motivational materials.

Every effort is important

Stuart Ray's 19 units may be just a small part of Burger King's worldwide operations, but when it comes to helping the world's environment, Ray feels that restaurateurs must start in their own hometown. "We don't expect to solve the problem single-handedly," he says of his franchise's commitment, "but we are willing to do what we can now."

—Melanie A. Crosby

Higher federal minimum wage April 1

Beginning April 1, 1991, foodservice operators and other employers who gross more than $500,000 a year will be required to pay a higher federal minimum wage.

However, the wage rate is not the only change scheduled. All of the following changes take effect next month.

Wage rate. The new federal minimum rises to $4.25 an hour. For those enterprises which on March 31, 1990, had annual gross sales of at least $362,500 but less than $500,000, the minimum wage remains at $3.35 per hour. State law prevails where wage rates are more favorable to the employee.

Tip credit. The allowable federal tip credit increases from 45 percent to 50 percent. Beginning April 1, employers may take a maximum federal tip credit of $2.12 against wages paid to tipped workers. In cases where employers pay the federal minimum of $4.25 an hour, for example, the April 1 change will allow employers to pay cash wages of $2.13. State laws on tip credits take precedence if they are more favorable to the employee.

Training wage. An employer may pay a worker less than 20 years of age a training wage of $3.62 an hour (85 percent of the $4.25 minimum) for a period not exceeding 90 days. A second employer may pay the training wage to the same worker for an additional 90 days if the employer provides an on-the-job training program that meets Department of Labor specifications. Some states restrict or prohibit the use of a training wage.

Bumpers introduces bill to clear up snafu

Senate Small Business Committee Chairman Dale Bumpers (D-AR) and at least 26 of his colleagues are waging a furious fight to pass a bill (S. 349) to correct a glitch in 1989's minimum-wage bill.

Bumpers introduced his bill on February 5 on behalf of the National Restaurant Association and other small-business groups to correct a glitch that has had consequences that few members of Congress intended.

Even though Congress voted in 1989 to exempt many small businesses from federal wage law, a separate provision of the legislation—misunderstood by most members of Congress who voted for it—requires the federal Fair Labor Standards Act to cover any employee involved in interstate commerce during any workweek, whether or not that employee works in a business that Congress intended to exempt from the law.

Sen. Dale Bumpers (D-AR) has introduced a bill to correct an error in the minimum-wage law.

The U.S. Department of Labor has already begun enforcing this provision. In the foodservice industry, employees involved in "interstate commerce" could include those who handle or process credit-card receipts, those who unload goods coming from another state, or even employees who make or receive out-of-state phone calls.

The National Restaurant Association is lobbying the House and Senate to pass S. 349 by April 1 to ensure that small businesses will not be required to pay the $4.25 minimum to workers engaged in interstate commerce. Ask your elected officials to support the Bumpers bill. Write your members of Congress at the U.S. Senate, Washington DC 20510 and the U.S. House of Representatives, Washington DC 20515.

—Denise Roach

DCROUNDUP

□ *Operators discuss teen-labor alternatives.* Restaurateurs and state restaurant association executives met with National Restaurant Association staff last month to plan a strategy to head off unreasonable restrictions on teen employment.

Operators pledged to go on the offensive to refute allegations that part-time jobs are harmful to teens and agreed to press the U.S. Department of Labor to explain teen-employment rules more clearly to employers and to lift unreasonable restrictions on teen workers. The group also decided to reinforce the foodservice industry's support for education by building closer ties between restaurateurs and national, state and local parent-teacher groups.

Lawmakers have not yet introduced legislation on teen labor in the 102nd Congress but are expected to do so.

□ *Payroll tax cut a Senate priority.* Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell (D-ME) has announced that Democrats will push hard this year to cut the 6.2 percent Social Security payroll tax for low and middle-income workers and their employers.

Mitchell's announcement marks the first time since a payroll tax cut began gaining support last year that he and other Senate leaders have backed the proposal. Introduced by Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan (D-NY), S. 11 would gradually reduce the Social Security rate to 5.2 percent and increase the taxable wage base to $82,200 by 1996.

□ *President's budget would extend TJTC.* The Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC) received a boost from the White House last month when President Bush proposed to extend the popular tax credit through December 31, 1992, in his budget for the fiscal year.

TJTC, which helps offset wages paid to disadvantaged workers, is scheduled to expire at the end of this year. The budget proposal marks the first time President Bush has endorsed a TJTC extension.

—Andrew McLauchlin

Are oysters safe to eat?

Louisiana and Alabama are considering regulations to require warning signs at retail and foodservice establishments selling raw oysters, clams or mussels—and California has already installed a warning requirement for Gulf Coast shellfish. Consumption of raw or lightly cooked shellfish has been implicated in several outbreaks of illnesses including salmonella, hepatitis A and a particularly dangerous organism called *vibrio vulnificus*. This may raise the question in some operators' minds: Are oysters safe to eat?

Oysters harvested from approved waters, packed under sanitary conditions and properly refrigerated are usually safe for raw consumption by healthy individuals, although they are not entirely risk-free. Cooking oysters to an internal temperature of 140° F or greater for four to six minutes destroys the common microorganisms of public-health concern. Oysters can be enjoyed in a variety of cooked preparations including steamed, stewed, roasted, baked, broiled, sauteed, poached and fried.

The following are some commonly asked questions about oysters.

□ *Should some people avoid eating oysters?*

Consumption of raw or partially cooked oysters carries a risk of serious illness to individuals with certain medical conditions. These medical conditions include liver disease; chronic alcohol abuse; diabetes; inflammatory bowel disease; achlorhydria (a condition in which the normal acidity of the stomach is reduced or absent); AIDS; cancer (especially if treatment is being taken); steroid dependence (as used for conditions such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, etc.); or any other immune-suppressed condition. It is highly recommended that individuals with these conditions consult a physician before eating raw or partially cooked oysters.

□ *Should oysters be eaten only in the months spelled with an "R"?*

Oysters may be eaten safely during any time of the year. However, oysters are highly perishable and can spoil quickly in the hot summer months if they are not properly refrigerated. Oysters can be kept fresh longer by utilizing today's improved temperature controls and distribution capabilities.

□ *What are the visible characteristics of good quality oysters?*

Oysters in the shell (shellstock) should *not* gape and should close readily when tapped. If the shell does not close tightly or the oyster meat is dry when the shell is opened, the product should be discarded. Avoid eating oysters when their shells are broken or damaged. The meat of shucked oysters is usually creamy tan in color, is plump and should smell fresh and mild.

□ *What do color variations in oysters mean?*

Although oysters are usually creamy tan, their diet or certain environmental conditions may cause them to take on other colorations. Oysters that have filtered certain microscopic organisms as food may have a reddish or greenish coloration. Pigments from these microorganisms may dissolve in water and are sometimes seen in the liquor. These discolorations are harmless and disappear when the product is cooked. However, a pink discoloration in oysters accompanied by an offensive odor is caused by the presence of yeast. These oysters should be discarded.

□ *How should oysters be handled and stored?*

Shellstock must be delivered in a container with an identification tag indicating the source. Restaurant operators must keep that tag for 90 days as an aid in backtracing any outbreaks of disease.

If the shell does not close tightly or the oyster meat is dry when the shell is opened, the product should be discarded.

Shellstock should be washed to remove excess debris prior to storage in well-ventilated refrigerated areas. The temperature of refrigeration units where oysters are stored should be between 34° F and 40° F. Shellstock should never be stored in airtight containers. Shucked oysters also require refrigeration, and consumers should closely adhere to the recommended expiration date on containers. Raw and cooked oysters should be handled separately, to avoid possible cross-contamination. Workspace and utensils should be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized between preparations.

□ *Can oysters be frozen?*

Oysters may be frozen, but once thawed, the texture of the meat becomes softer, and the oysters are generally not suitable for raw consumption. Frozen oysters, however, are quite acceptable when they are cooked. Oysters should be frozen quickly at a temperature of 0° F or lower. Rapid freezing results in smaller ice-crystal formation and less tissue damage. Freezer bags and plastic containers with lids are preferred for freezing. Shucked oysters should be frozen immersed in their liquor or water, and excess air should be expelled from the containers to provide protection from freezer burn. In storage, frozen oysters should be maintained at 0° F or lower. Oysters should always be thawed in the refrigerator, and at least 24 hours should be allowed for thawing. Oysters should never be refrozen.

□ *Does eating oysters really help one's sex life?*

Since Roman times, people have believed oysters to be an aphrodisiac. There is no scientific basis for this belief. However, therapists treating patients for sexual disorders sometimes recommend eating oysters because of their high iron content.

—Prepared in part by the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (ISSC) Education Committee

Finding the balance

When chef Terrance Brennan was first approached with the idea of preparing his brand of haute cuisine for a fixed-price menu designed to reach value-minded customers, he was skeptical. At the time, Brennan was executive chef of the Polo in the Westbury Hotel in New York City, an elegant restaurant where the per person check averages almost $70. Before the Polo, he cooked at Le Cirque in New York, Moulin de Mougins and Taillevent in France, and La Gavroche in London.

"Andrew Silverman came in to the Polo and liked what I was doing," says Brennan. "He approached me with the idea of a fixed-price-menu restaurant that could tap a broader clientele with lower check averages. Initially I thought the idea was crazy. I mean with the food I was preparing, how could we keep the check averages so low?"

Gradually the idea began to intrigue Brennan. "I was ready to do something different. We're not reinventing the restaurant here, but we are serving haute cuisine at prices more people can afford," he says.

The anticipation of increased customer traffic lured him into the scheme. "At the Polo, we'd do 80 to 100 dinners a night. I wanted to cook for more people who could afford to eat in my restaurant. As a chef I love cooking for people, and I thought this would give me a chance to reach more people with my food," he says.

Brennan worked with owners Silverman and Steven Dampf to prepare the concept for the Prix Fixe restaurant, located in the Flatiron District of Manhattan. They designed two lunch menus, one priced at $13.50 and the other at $18.50. The $13.50 lunch menu offers diners a choice of four appetizers, five main courses and four desserts. The $18.50 menu lists two appetizers, two main courses and two desserts. The lunch crowd may choose an appetizer and main course or a main course and a dessert. There are two dinner menus as well, one at $21 and the other at $36, and patrons are allowed a choice from all three courses.

"The concept really appealed to me because the menu is all laid out. You know how much you're going to spend when you come in. Customers don't have to agonize over whether to order something because of the prices, so it allows them to make choices quicker—and that allows us to have faster turnovers. We knew going in we'd have to do volume in order to make this work," says Brennan.

The most exciting task for Brennan has been preparing the same high-quality food he prepared at establishments such as the Polo—at a lower food cost. "It is definitely a challenge to do high quality at high volume. You have to find the balance. I call it adjusting, not downscaling," he says.

Brennan says that having a limited menu helps a great deal with keeping costs down because he can usually figure how many of each entree he'll sell. He says that he always includes a chicken dish on the menu "since chicken is an inexpensive item. Selling 100 chicken entrees allows me to prepare my signature dish of salmon in horseradish crust with salmon caviar. That dish is like our calling

SAUTEED SKATE A LA NAGE WITH LEMONGRASS AND CORIANDER BROTH

Serves 6

Ingredients:

For the skate:
- 1½ lbs. skate wing filets
- 1½ ozs. olive oil
- ½ cup milk
- ½ cup flour
- 1 Tbs. coriander seeds
- 30 pieces of coriander leaves or ¼ cup loosely packed
- Salt and pepper to taste

For the lemongrass and coriander broth:
- ½ cup white onions, sliced thinly
- ½ cup fennel, sliced thinly
- ½ cup carrots, sliced thinly
- ½ cup celery, sliced thinly
- ½ cup parsnip, sliced thinly
- 2½ cups dry white wine
- 4 ozs. extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 ozs. lemon juice
- 2½ cups water or chicken stock

For the sachet:
- 3 lemongrass stalks, cut in small pieces
- 2 bunches coriander stems and roots, chopped
- 2 Tbs. coriander seeds
- 1 Tbs. cracked black pepper
- 1 bunch parsley stems
- 2 bay leaves
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Tie all ingredients in a cheesecloth

Method:

In a large saucepot, place vegetables for broth, extra-virgin olive oil, salt and sachet. Cover and sweat vegetables for about 6 to 7 minutes. Add wine and lemon juice and reduce by one-quarter. Add water or stock and simmer for 5 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste. Extract liquid from sachet and discard. Keep warm.

For the skate:

Dip skate wings in milk and dredge lightly in flour. Saute skate in a nonstick pan with olive oil over high heat about 1 minute on each side. Skate should be nicely browned. Salt and pepper to taste.

Divide a la nage garnish and some broth on six warm plates. Place skate wing on top. Garnish with coriander leaves and seeds. Serve immediately.

—Courtesy of Terrance Brennan

Nutritional analysis per serving: 492 calories, 26 grams protein, 20 grams carbohydrate, 28 grams fat, 294 mg. sodium; cholesterol levels not available

card, and I can put that on the $21 menu if I watch my costs closely," he says.

The buying end of the business is very important, says Brennan. Staff members go to the various food markets to secure the freshest ingredients at lower prices. The operators of Prix Fixe also make a habit of paying their bills from food purveyors within 10 days, and that practice nets them a big savings.

Although finding the proper balance in his new position at Prix Fixe is not always easy, Brennan says he is glad he accepted the challenge. "Personally, I feel that haute cuisine had gotten out of hand. Some of these places were charging outrageous prices. I've learned I can still prepare the foods I used to, but now I might use skate instead of halibut, using the same method of preparation and sauces so it still tastes delicious. I think we're going to see a lot of top-end restaurants holding their prices steady instead of raising them, and we'll see more casualization—still very serious with the food, but more price-conscious at the same time," he predicts.

As much as Brennan enjoys cooking for others, his customers are showing even greater enthusiasm for consuming his culinary efforts. "We've had a fantastic reception so far. I think at first people thought, 'Oh, well, they're just doing this initially, then they'll raise the prices.' Even some of my colleagues were skeptical," says Brennan.

But there's no secret or trick to making this formula work, according to Brennan. It just takes a long pole and a lot of balance.

—Jennifer Batty

Winter board-meeting report

The National Restaurant Association's Board of Directors gathered for its winter meeting in January in Orlando, Florida, and the following issues were addressed by board committees:

The **Government Affairs** Committee reaffirmed its commitment to the association's government-affairs agenda by planning individual visits to Washington to meet with Congressional representatives. Issues of particular concern include teen-labor laws, repeal of the FICA tax on tips, tip-reporting requirements, proposed civil-rights legislation, restoration of the small-business exemption to the minimum wage, expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit and mandated health-care proposals.

The **State Relations** Committee reviewed a December survey of chains, state restaurant association executives and National Restaurant Association directors. The survey identified the top 10 state legislative issues for 1991, showing that mandated benefits, environmental proposals and taxes were the top priorities.

The **Political Action** Committee authorized $34,000 in contributions to 23 candidates (seven Democrats, 16 Republicans).

The **Communications** Committee reviewed the launching of the National Restaurant Association Newswire, a monthly wire that publicizes association events, activities and achievements as well as national industry news. The newswire is circulated to magazines and newsletters of the state restaurant associations.

The **Convention** Committee discussed plans for the upcoming 72nd annual National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show, May 18–22, 1991, in Chicago. Features at this year's Show will include the American Culinary Classic, an international competition among chefs from 16 countries; special exhibitor sections such as the new "Hotel Collection" and the Seafood Center; and renowned speakers such as broadcast personality Larry King and *New York Times* columnist Jane Brody.

The **Membership** Com-

Designated-driver programs save lives and businesses

by Michael E. Hurst

This may just be the year of the designated driver.

Certainly at no other time in recent memory has such pressure existed—both political and societal—to find a solution to the national tragedy of drunk driving. In statehouses across the country, the issue of blood-alcohol-content (BAC) levels—the level of alcohol in the blood at which a driver is legally deemed impaired—is being fiercely debated, and an increasing number of constituents are demanding that BAC levels be lowered from the nationally recognized standard of .10.

Five states have already yielded to these demands, the state of California being the most recent to lower its legal BAC limit to .08. At this rate, and in today's charged climate, .08 as the legal BAC limit may soon be the norm, not the exception. The question is, will it stop there?

Not if the federal government has anything to say about it. I had an opportunity recently to hear an address by Transportation Secretary Samuel Skinner, during which he suggested that the federal government is considering using the same tactic to urge states to lower BAC levels that it used to get states to raise the legal drinking age: namely, it will withhold federal highway funding from states that don't comply.

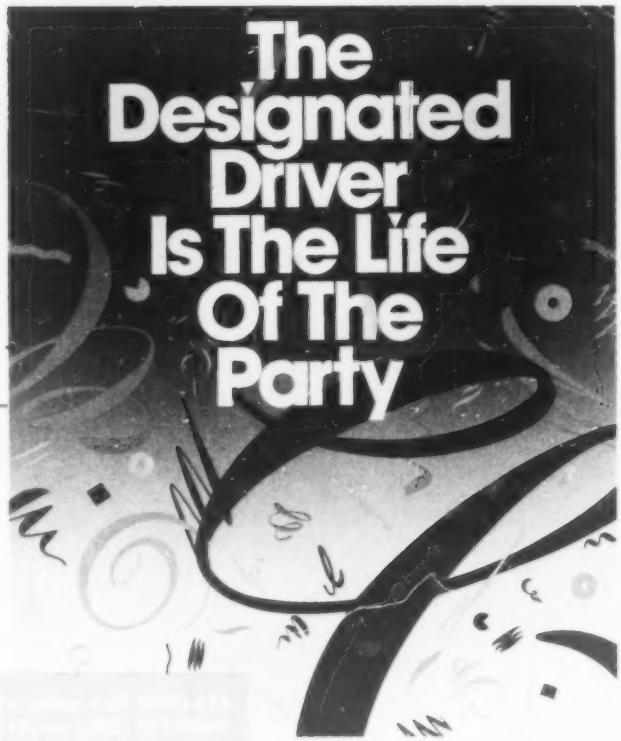
Granted, this was just speculation, not a concrete proposal. But Congress has gone so far as to request from the National Academy of Science (NAS) a recommendation as to what would be an appropriate BAC level for drivers. In a previous recommendation, NAS established a level of .04 as appropriate for drivers of commercial vehicles. It isn't difficult to guess which direction they will go in setting a limit for *all* drivers.

Also, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), a division of the Department of Transportation, is expected to issue its own recommendation. More than likely, the NHTSA-proposed limits will reflect Skinner's acknowledgement during his speech that "a BAC level of .00" is the ultimate goal.

Never mind that lowering BAC levels is relatively inef-

mittee resolved that all members from the 30 dual-membership states will be offered a membership renewal discount if they recruit a new association member. The discount, equal to 50 percent of the dues of the new member, will be offered for a one-year trial period.

The **Projects with Industry** Committee announced that in May, five awards will be given to recognize companies employing people who are disabled. Recipients of the awards will be Radisson Hotels; Pizza Hut, Inc.; Ponderosa; ARA and Elwyn Institutes.



fective in keeping problem drinkers off the road. According to NHTSA, drivers with BAC levels between .01 and .09 account for less than 8 percent of the total number of drivers involved in fatal accidents. Drivers with BAC levels of .10 or more make up almost 25 percent of the total.

Another set of figures illustrates the same pattern. Between 60 and 75 percent of all convicted drunk drivers have BAC levels of at least .15 at the time of arrest and are considered to be problem drinkers.

Clearly, these statistics show that it would be a waste of person power and public funds to attempt to detect and arrest drivers with BAC levels under .10. Those funds would be better spent enforcing existing laws and building programs to treat problem drinkers.

Logic notwithstanding, the pressure to do something is very real, as any politician will tell you—or as many restaurant operators will tell you, for that matter. As servers (however responsible) of alcoholic beverages, we are perceived as being part of the debate—and unfortunately, we are misperceived by many as being part of the problem.

As business operators and members of our communities, it is important that we correct any misperceptions that may exist and that we clearly and forcefully demonstrate our commitment to responsible alcoholic-beverage service. This is where the designated-driver concept comes in.

Simply stated, the concept is as follows: One person in a dining party is designated as the driver and refrains from drinking alcohol. The role of the restaurant is to post signs and other reminders of the need to designate a driver; in some instances, the designated driver is given free or discount nonalcoholic drinks.

That's all there is to it. No huge financial outlay, no complicated implementation process—just a simple program that works. Customers who patronize establishments that have designated-driver programs can drink moderately or not at all, without concern about confusing BAC levels. Operators can worry less about third-party liability in case of an accident and can focus more on making certain that customers have a pleasant dining experience. And most important, communities can feel secure in knowing that there are fewer drunk drivers on the road.

To the naysayers who suggest that designating a driver may make others in a party feel they are "off the hook" and therefore free to overindulge, I say let's give our customers a little more credit. A moderate drinker will drink moderately no matter what the occasion or circumstances. Similarly, a problem drinker will try to overindulge no matter what the circumstances—designated driver or no designated driver.

Of course, as operators it is our responsibility to stop serving alcohol to an inebriated person. But I think you'll agree (and studies show) that with today's heightened awareness about good health and the dangers of overconsumption of alcohol, most of our customers drink moderately and responsibly.

The National Restaurant Association recently pledged its support to two major designated-driver programs. The first program, developed by Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), is promoted through table tents, buttons, coasters and napkins, all bearing the slogan "The Designated Driver—You Can Live With It." The second program, organized by the Harvard School of Public Health's Harvard Alcohol Project, uses the slogan "The Designated Driver is the Life of the Party." Materials and posters promoting both programs are available from the association's Washington headquarters.

Whether you take advantage of one of these programs or develop one of your own, I urge you to establish a designated-driver program in your restaurant. At the least, you will demonstrate to your community that you are committed to responsible alcoholic-beverage service and possibly help to deter further government action on the BAC issue. At the most, you may save lives.

SHOULD YOUR RESTAURANT ACCEPT

DEBIT CARDS?

Debit cards are the newest payment option that retailers are offering their customers. If debit cards continue to grow in popularity, every restaurant will have to consider accepting this new form of plastic payment.

by Mary Follin

As customers continue to choose plastic over the "green stuff" to make purchases, new ways have been invented to enable consumers to part with their money without actually handling a dime. Latest on the plastic horizon are debit cards—bank cards that operate on the "pay now, then enjoy" premise rather than the "enjoy now, pay later" philosophy of the traditional credit card.

Although debit cards are just now becoming popular at some convenience stores, grocery stores and gasoline stations, restaurants will soon have to consider adopting this new method of payment as a viable way for money to change accounts.

What is a debit card?

The term "debit card" is defined as a card that records payment from the customer to the retailer before the receipt of goods. A customer may present a pre-paid card (known as a cash card) at the register, and the card is then debited for the amount of purchase. Or the customer may use a bank card to instantaneously transfer funds from the customer's bank account to the restaurant's account through use of an on-line system such as the kind used with automatic teller machine (ATM) cards. Each of these cards has its own features and benefits.

First, let's consider cash cards. Mike Haynes, vice president of Payment Systems Development Corporation (PSDC), a Fairfax, Virginia, firm that produces and markets a cash card, describes a pre-paid cash-card system as one that allows consumers to purchase $10, $20 or $50 cards at automated card dispensers.

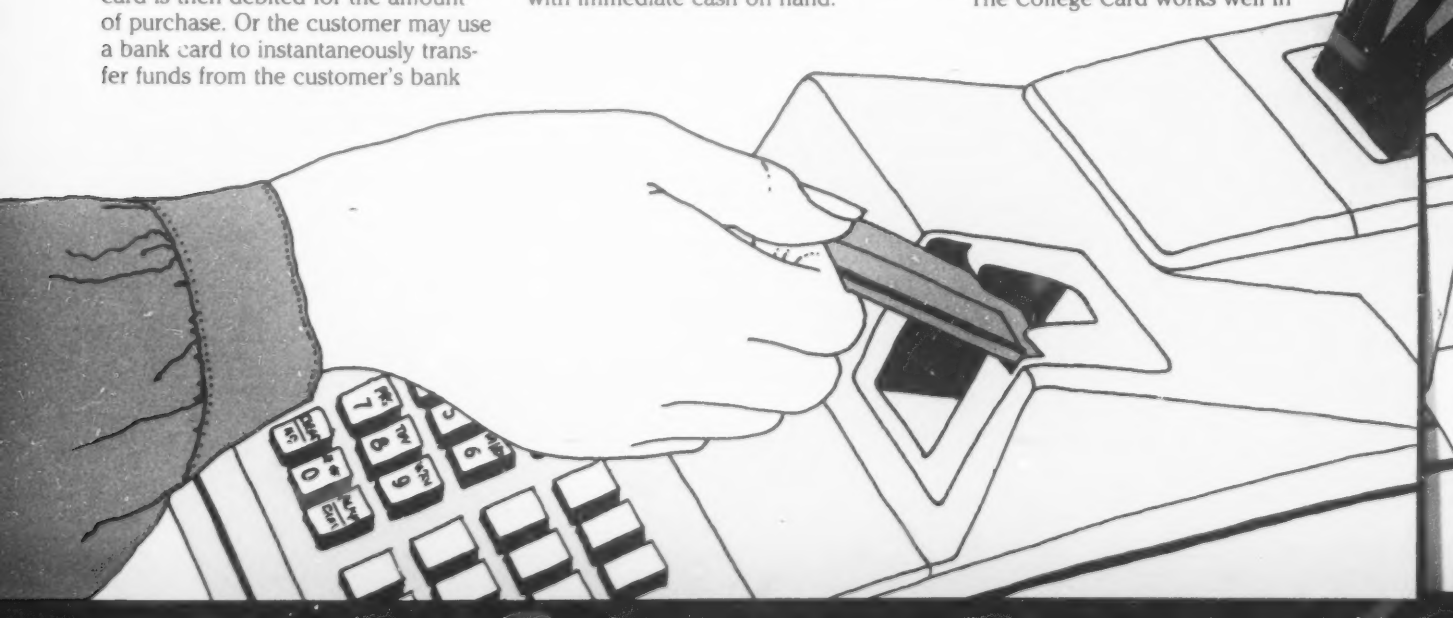
After purchasing the cards, customers can then "spend" the cards over time instead of cash. PSDC's cash card, known as the College Card, is targeted to University of Maryland students and is redeemable at participating restaurants in College Park, Maryland. "The College Card spends like cash," says Haynes, "but the card carrier doesn't need to be concerned with immediate cash on hand."

According to Haynes, vendors honoring the College Card appreciate the speed with which the card swipes through a point-of-sale (POS) reader, automatically debiting the card's magnetic strip for the amount of purchase. At the end of the day, the POS terminal totals the day's College Card receipts and electronically transfers funds into the establishment's account via the telephone line. "The whole transaction usually occurs within 24 hours," says Haynes. That means that the money is in the bank for the retailer.

Although implementation of the College Card system is in its infancy, Haynes reports that students seem to be catching on to the idea of carrying a card instead of cash. The novelty of carrying plastic and budgeting meal expenses appeals to "cash-poor" college students, says Haynes. Furthermore, many retailers that honor the College Card are offering 5 to 20 percent discounts to card users.

Low transaction fees

"The College Card works well in



establishments that cannot economically offer credit cards," says Haynes in explaining why debit cards could be more popular than credit cards with some retailers. Pre-paid cards have a set transaction fee of 15 to 20 cents per transaction rather than the percentage-of-sale fee charged by credit-card companies. With a pre-paid card, fast food restaurants and other establishments with relatively low sales per ticket can offer consumers a method of payment other than cash. Haynes is aware of credit card experiments conducted by fast food companies. "Credit card companies are attempting to migrate into the [low check-size] market, but we think the pre-paid card will be the preferred cash alternative in that arena."

Richard Carbone, owner of the restaurant Hawthorne's Chicago Eatery in College Park, Maryland, agrees. With relatively small per ticket sales, Hawthorne's is a participant in the cash-card program. Carbone sees two customer groups in the near term for the card: college students and retired senior citizens. Both groups, he says, are reluctant to use credit cards, and the cash card is a nice alternative.

"Both demographic groups are on fixed incomes and prefer not to charge," says Carbone. "They can buy a cash card with their weekly allotment and spend it in area restaurants."

Hawthorne's offers a 10 percent discount to card users and has found a steady increase in cash-card patronage. As an early user of the system, Carbone is willing to wait for a return on his investment. He cites the low cost of entry, minimal monthly equipment rental fee and nominal transaction cost as a worthwhile exchange for the increased patronage he foresees in offering the payment option.

ATM cards in restaurants

An alternative way restaurants use debit cards is to accept existing ATM cards. Restaurants that accept ATM-card payment use an adaptation of today's widely used ATM bank-card technology. ATM machines at the point of sale in restaurants allow a customer to use a bank ATM card when purchasing food. Carl Karcher Enterprises, based in Anaheim, California, is pioneering the use of ATMs at restaurant point of sale in its Carl's Jr. restaurants. Bob Altman, vice president of management information systems, describes a typical transaction: "When a meal is ordered, the server asks the customer whether he prefers to pay 'cash or ATM,' " Altman explains. If the customer replies "ATM," the server hits the ATM key. The display on the back of the register asks the customer to slide in an ATM card and enter a personal identification number (PIN). The customer enters the PIN on the numerical pad (out of the server's sight) connected to the register. If the customer wants cash back above the purchase total, the server keys in the request.

Instantaneously, the appropriate amount of cash is transferred from the customer's checking account to the restaurant's account. "The transfer takes approximately eight seconds," says Altman, "and if there's no cash back, the drawer doesn't even open."

Carl's Jr. has found that the cash-back option, in particular, draws large crowds. As an added bonus for the restaurant, since the two cash-back allotments are $20 and $40, the restaurant is able to dump $20 bills—a denomination that is quick to accumulate but hard to put back into circulation.

Altman says that implementing point-of-sale ATMs was a logical step for the chain. According to Altman, 80 percent of the nation's debit-card transactions take place in California. Carl's Jr. was able to take advantage of the already established debit-card networks known as STAR and INTERLINK, which are currently recognized by most banks statewide.

The credits of debit cards

"There are a number of reasons for both consumers and merchants to become involved in debit processing," says Pam Sandstrom, sales manager for Wells Fargo in San Francisco, California, the nation's largest debit processor. Among them she lists convenience, transaction speed, cost-effectiveness over credit cards and the appeal to non-cash-carrying clientele.

"People do not like to carry checkbooks," says Sandstrom, "and are often out of cash. But bank cards remain at all times in back pockets, wallets and purses."

Haynes of PSDC also cites convenience as a compelling reason for consumers to rely on debit cards. If a student prudently purchases cash cards, for example, he can spend the rest of his cash on books and other items—and still go out to eat when he wants.

There is another feature of debit cards that may interest restaurateurs. Because the cardholder is not spending cash, a debit-card purchase is an average of 50 percent higher than a cash purchase—a statistic confirmed by Bob Altman of Carl's Jr. People seem to be more willing to debit an electronic or magnetic balance than to deplete cash on hand.

"Merchants realize numerous benefits from debit-card technology," says Haynes. He emphasizes that debit cards do not carry the same liability for merchants as do other non-cash methods of payment. Check cashing requires stringent consumer identification, and accepting credit cards risks card abuse. Debit cards are as reliable as cash, and even more secure, because debit-card revenues are immune to employee theft or other shortages.

Michael Cooper, manager of the restaurant Nunzios in Albuquerque, New Mexico, has found security to be the most significant advantage of its new ATM debit system. Nunzios, a pizza and sandwich carryout chain,

installed ATMs at each of its five Albuquerque locations last summer.

"The hassle of dealing with bad checks has been eliminated by our new debit system," says Cooper. "Before, we had to go back and forth with the bank, and finally with the customer, before we got our money." With the ATM system, the money is guaranteed up front.

Debit cards also have potential as marketing tools. Private card companies such as PSDC usually offer cooperative advertising. By promoting the card, they are actually promoting the participating businesses. Financial institutions, already promoting ATMs, are only too happy to publicize the added convenience of ATMs in restaurants. Vendors can use the card as a draw by offering discounts for card patronage.

"The use of debit cards has enabled us to market to a broader spectrum," says Carbone of Hawthorne's. He has found that cooperative advertising with the cash card's issuer has brought in new clientele, some of whom become regulars simply because Hawthorne's honors the cash card.

Planning and installation

George Cox, director of operations for a Burger King franchise that accepts cash cards in College Park, Maryland, describes their entry into the debit-card business as painless.

"Basically, PSDC [which issues the cards] set everything up," says Cox. According to Cox, PSDC did research and planning to Cox's satisfaction even before the franchise was approached. The cash-card company's representatives installed POS machines and an automated card dispenser, and they committed to providing service in the event of equipment failure. "And training employees is a five-minute job," adds Cox.

Not all debit-card setups have been so easy, however. Carl's Jr. had quite a different experience during the planning and installation stage. Although ATMs had already penetrated other California industries and were widely accepted by the public in general, installing POS ATMs in restaurants posed a challenge.

"We had to coordinate our plan between POS manufacturers, PIN-pad manufacturers, the telephone company and our bank," says Altman. He points out that a consideration as simple as the sequence of a single transaction affects all interested parties.

"Above all, transaction speed cannot be sacrificed for another feature," emphasizes Altman. "People will not tolerate a new service, no matter how useful, that increases their wait in line."

After devising a plan, Carl's Jr. ran an eight-month test in San Diego and Sacramento to "get the bugs out." Altman describes a litany of problems: The PIN-pad company had not thought to waterproof the PIN pad. A nearby taxi driver keying in a dispatch machine ran interference with the ATM and brought the system down in the presence of promotional TV crews. Just 24 hours later, a paramedic in the restaurant crashed the system—again with a dispatch machine.

"French fries were getting caught in the keyboard," laughs Altman, detailing the early problems. But he goes on to say that each problem has been solved and the chainwide system is now working beautifully.

"We are tremendously pleased with the success of our ATMs," says Altman. "The increase in revenues is absolutely worth the start-up hassles."

Cooper of Nunzios in Albuquerque is also pleased with their ATM debit system, but he recounts a much smoother transition than Carl's Jr. because Nunzios was not involved in the planning stage. A private card company, Mesa Grande Bank Cards, approached Nunzios with an already well-developed plan.

"They just rolled right in and set up," says Cooper. "I was surprised how easy the system was to learn." Cooper says that training requirements are minimal and that end-of-day accounting has not been complicated by the new system.

Should you consider debit cards?

"Not only are debit cards a viable option," says Sandstrom of Wells Fargo, "but debit cards will soon be a customer demand merchants will need to supply to remain competitive."

Sandstrom goes on to say that debit cards are in the same phase that credit cards were before national companies took over credit-card distribution and service. Small, regional banks and business owners are offering their own cards, but since there are no national networks, market penetration is slow. Some states have established networks; but in others, a large bank that refuses to join has hindered the practicality of a network.

Universal acceptance of a card is paramount for the long-term success of debit cards. People must be able to "spend" their cards in what is perceived to be an unlimited number of establishments.

Another obstacle, according to Sandstrom, is the availability of equipment. Card dispensers and retrofitted POS equipment with PIN pads are currently built on a custom basis and are not yet available "off-the-shelf." But as more merchants become involved in debit processing, equipment manufacturers are responding by making debit-processing equipment available in a more cost-effective manner.

"Technical difficulties aside, the major hurdle is getting people to try the card," says Sandstrom. The general population is unfamiliar with the concept and is reluctant to try a new system. Sandstrom advises that entrepreneurs experimenting with debit processing should allocate plenty of time and money for promotion and consumer education, enticing the consumer to try the card "just once." According to Sandstrom, research shows that once customers use this method of payment, they never pay any other way.

In fact, this increasingly accepted theory is one reason Burger King was willing to even consider implementing the debit-card system of payment in its College Park location. According to George Cox, "Whether we choose it now or not, this method of payment is going to happen to us sooner or later." ❑

Mary Follin is a freelance writer in Falls Church, Virginia.

SMART CARDS
THE PLASTIC OF THE FUTURE

by L.H. (Zarl) Malsawma

Frequent-diner programs, targeted marketing and instant meal payment will all be made easy when customers carry smart cards in their pockets.

Consider the smart card from the consumer's point of view: A small plastic card with a tiny electronic brain that stores and manages all the critical information you need to carry with you. The card stores your vital health statistics and dietary restrictions. It functions as your security card for entering buildings. It keeps track of the bonus points you accumulate in a frequent-diner program at a restaurant and contains your credit-card number and current bank balance, giving you the ability to authorize purchases without having to call for credit authorization. In addition, the card gives merchants information about you that would help them personalize and improve service to you.

If this sounds like an object from a science fiction story, it's not. It's all part of smart-card technology.

Smart cards are a reality now, although they have yet to meet mainstream acceptance. These smart cards are plastic cards, the size of credit cards, that have microchips imbedded in them. Like magnetic-stripe cards, they store information that can be accessed with a card reader. However, because the imbedded electronic circuits in smart cards are more resistant to tampering, smart cards are more reliable.

Smart cards have a memory capacity larger than that of magnetic-stripe cards, and smart cards can store several files for different functions. This "multifunctionality" of the card is the key feature and main appeal of smart cards.

Another valuable feature of smart cards is the security of information stored in them. Although the information in magnetic stripes can be read by any magnetic-stripe reader, data carried in smart-card chips can be secured and accessed only with Personal Identification Numbers (PINs). The card can even lock itself up after incorrect codes are entered a number of times.

There are three main components to any smart-card system: the cards themselves, the card reader/writer and the application software. The most simple readers are like telephone modems that connect the card with the personal computer containing the application software. More sophisticated readers can perform all smart-card transactions without being connected to a PC.

"These cards offer an opportunity to better control finances by having a bank in your pocket," says David Brancoli, director of public relations for VISA U.S.A. in San Francisco. "They represent a large leap in terms of convenience. They provide security for the customer in that no one can access files on the card without the customer's PIN, which cuts down on credit-card fraud. They also benefit the merchant by cutting down on time and telecommunications costs because of their off-line authorization capability."

Smart cards in restaurants

"I was sick and tired of the 'two-for-one' coupon systems that reward all customers alike, whether or not they were faithful patrons of the restaurants," says Jim Salazar, co-owner of the two family-owned Las Margaritas restaurants in Vancouver, British Columbia. Three years ago, he formed Clientell Systems Corporation, a software development firm specializing in smart-card technology, to produce the "Visitrak" frequent-diner program, which has been successfully implemented in the two restaurants and in a third, nonaffiliated operation.

The goal of "Visitrak" is to build customer loyalty by encouraging return business, and its data base provides for targeted marketing. Customer participants in the program purchase a two-year membership for $24, and membership includes a personalized smart card, personalized mailings and eligibility for the frequent-diner promotion.

The personalized smart card stores the customer's (cardholder's) name and address, phone number, birthday and profession. The card also keeps track of the customer's purchases and preferences at the two Las Margaritas restaurants, as well as those made in the third restaurant.

Every time the card is read at the restaurants, data is fed into a PC that produces mailing lists for targeted marketing. In this way, only notices that would interest a particular customer are mailed to that customer. For example, a customer who prefers vegetarian meals would get only the mailings that announced vegetarian specials at the restaurants.

As information is accumulated, customers are stratified and rated on

the basis of how frequently they visit the restaurant. Their rating determines the number of bonus points they receive each time they purchase something from the restaurant. For example, someone who visits the restaurant once a week gets a greater percentage of points than a less frequent user of the system. There are also designated "happy hours" during which customers can earn twice, and even three times, as many bonus points as those earned during regular hours.

There is one card reader at the hostess stand in each restaurant participating in the program, and there is one PC at each restaurant. Data from each PC is downloaded once a week for analysis, and customer preference data is printed out.

"Members of the VIP Program get at least $120 worth of benefits from participating in the program," says Salazar, "and customers appreciate the personalized marketing made possible by the system—90 percent of them agree to being polled for evaluation of the system. And the success rate of targeted mailings is almost 80 percent, compared to the usual 10 percent success rate reported for mass mailings.

"The drawbacks to the system, basically, were problems with fine-tuning the software," says Salazar. "Training of employees to process transactions with the cards is crucial to the system's effectiveness."

Nevertheless, there are approximately 500 members in the program now, and the customer base is growing—as is business at the restaurants.

The cost of installing the system with 500 cards at each restaurant was $20,000 per restaurant. The most expensive part of the system is the cards themselves, which occasionally fail as a result of improper handling by cardholders. Storing them in very tight wallets and bending them severely can damage the microchip imbedded in them, says Salazar. He estimates that the system will pay for itself in about six-and-a-half months.

Salazar is clearly a smart-card believer. "It would cost $10,000 to $20,000 to do a one-time marketing study for a chain of two restaurants, and that does not include the labor costs and inconvenience involved in polling customers at the restaurants," says Salazar. "So from the merchant's point of view, the smart-card system is a cost-effective, long-term marketing strategy that has a lot of promise."

Robert Huber, director of campus and foodservice systems in the smart card and systems division of DataCard Corporation in Minnetonka, Minnesota, believes that smart cards would be most applicable to restaurants in shopping areas. "People gravitate to shopping areas where there are many restaurants," he said. "And one could have a 'smart mall card' that would allow access to different merchants within a mall."

In fast food restaurants, customers could use smart cards as debit cards for paying for food. Combined with self-service ordering, smart cards could allow a customer to order without a cashier at all. Such a system would reduce the number of employees needed to run the counter area of the operation.

A viable technology

Henry Dreifus, senior manager and director of worldwide smart card consulting for Andersen Consulting in Chicago, estimates that there are about one million smart cards currently being used in the United States. Smart cards are now functioning as devices for access control in and out of buildings, data security of defense-related government agencies, inventory management ("smart tags" on boxes), frequent-shopper programs, and multipurpose cards for college students.

Ken Stroud, president and chief operating executive of Dahl's grocery stores in Des Moines, Iowa, had the smart-card-based "Vision Value System" installed for testing in one of his stores in September 1989. Between 5,000 and 6,000 cards were issued to shoppers at the store. The cards store demographic information such as name, address, phone number, number of children and whether or not pets and dishwashers were owned by the customer. They also store frequent-shopper points and the customer's VISA card number and balance. Information on the card is accessed with a PIN.

"A good number—16 percent—of all shoppers at the store use the card," says Stroud, "and the frequent-shopper application showed positive results, with business increasing for a year."

Howard Soloway, director of development in the research and development department of Fisher Restaurant Systems, says, "There aren't enough of them [smart cards] out there yet for us to develop interface systems for them. The technology will catch on, but it's probably two years away. Smart cards could speed up credit-card processing tremendously and cut several minutes off transactions. But at this time, they are more expensive to install than credit cards."

Oki America, Inc., in Hackensack, New Jersey, is testing a smart-card system that can read both magnetic-stripe cards and smart cards. The retail price of a terminal for the system is about $1,000. "The hardware is ready," says David Rowan, director of business development for Oki. "We're just waiting for the customer application softwares."

All on one key ring

"The value of a smart card is comparable to the value of a set of good keys on one key ring," says Rowan.

Personal Computer Card Corporation in Lakeland, Florida, has been producing smart cards since 1986. "The smart-card technology has been very static in the United States. Since the infrastructure for credit cards is already there, there is no motivation to replace it," says Kip Wheeler, president and chief executive officer. However, Wheeler also says that the company is "on the verge of expanding now."

Robert Huber of DataCard Corporation says that his smart-card business has seen "tremendous expansion" during its three-year existence. In addition to the three systems already installed on college campuses last year, they expect to install several more on campuses this summer. "Smart cards are the ultimate one-card solution," says Huber. ❑

L.H. (Zari) Malsawma is an editorial intern for ***Restaurants USA.***

HOW FAST

Eric Westbrook

SHOULD A FRANCHISE GROW?

by Gary M. Stern

In the halcyon days of the 1960s, when all a franchise had to do was open restaurants and business would boom, chains prospered, and growth possibilities seemed unlimited. But with outlets lining every highway, mall and urban thoroughfare, a burning question arises: How fast should a franchise grow?

Without a doubt, certain franchises have grown too quickly. Ironically, this rapid growth has sometimes led to a chain's disappearance. At one point the Pioneer Fried Chicken chain had more than 1,000 outlets, but it offered little support to its franchisees. Its feverish growth led to its downfall. D'Lites of America, a natural-foods chain that numbered more than 800 outlets in the late 1980s, was ahead of consumer tastes and faded because it grew too quickly. Bill Cherkasky, president of the International Franchise Association in Washington DC, notes that too many franchises expand too fast. "Rates of growth outstrip their resources to make their growth orderly, progressive and profitable."

Home-office support is a must

So how quickly should a franchise grow? According to John P. Hayes, president of The Hayes Group, a Fort Washington, Pennsylvania, franchise consulting and marketing firm, "a franchise can grow only as fast as the home office can support franchisees." Staff must be there to help franchisees through their first year by offering sufficient training and relevant demographics, real estate, contracts, food-preparation and advertising support.

Sonic Industries Inc., the Oklahoma City–based company that franchises more than 1,000 Sonic Drive-Ins, performs a market analysis of each area considered for a franchise. The key points of such an analysis are demographics and competition. Steve Lynn, Sonic's president, says the franchise is growing about 15 percent each year. "We will not go past what we can service," he adds. Sonic, like many franchises, offers co-op purchasing and advertising, six-month field training, on-the-job training and marketing support after opening.

At the fledgling Red River Barbecue, a franchise based in Wexford, Pennsylvania, that specializes in hickory-cooked barbecue, founder and president Ron Sofranko is committed

to avoiding "fast buck" growth. He wants to grow at a pace of four to eight franchises a year. "The key thing," he points out, "is to franchise at the appropriate time and for the company to be ready to franchise. We're looking at long-term growth, not quick fixes."

Controlled growth does not mean limited growth, however. Gregg Reynolds, vice president, public affairs, for Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC), reports that KFC is interested in doubling its franchises in the next decade to number about 5,000 in the United States. KFC, based in Louisville, Kentucky, will expand in nontraditional ways, he says, including home delivery, small sandwich shops, kiosks and stadium sales. "Wherever people want to eat chicken, you have to be there," says Reynolds.

At Subway, the rate of growth is even faster: 1,000 units per year. Although this rapid pace makes some franchisees nervous, the headquarters staff believes it is right for the company.

Visibility is key to Subway's success, notes vice president of marketing Richard Pilchen. If someone eats at a Subway on one street, and then spots another Subway two blocks away the next day, that name recognition will lure him or her to dine there again. Growth, he says, "is limitless."

The underlying structure of Subway is what enables it to grow so quickly, says Pilchen. With an "infrastructure" in place that provides training, aggressive marketing, leasing assistance and in-house expertise, Subway "works hard to make sure the franchisee is successful."

Communication is key

Attorney William B. Schreiber, who specializes in franchise agreements with the law firm Dow, Lohnes & Albertson in New York City, agrees that communication is the key to a good working relationship between a franchisor and franchisee. For a partnership to succeed, he says, communication about market share, increased competition and expansion plans must take place. When a franchisor must refer to a contract to prove a point, the problems have gotten out of hand, he says.

Franchise involvement in policy decisions

At Arby's, a new regime is in place that is dedicated to involving franchisees and preventing conflict about oversaturation. Jim Squire, group vice president of Arby's International, says Arby's is committed to "franchise involvement in major policy decisions." A board composed of franchisees reviews marketing plans, advertising programs and new menu items. Arby's, which currently has 2,300 outlets nationwide and wants to double that number in the next five years, will multiply on the basis of "what percentage of its market share is reasonable to expect to maintain nationwide," says Squire.

"One of the worst things that can happen to a franchisor," he adds, "is to have franchisees go out of business. That taints the franchise concept. It doesn't make any business sense to put one franchise in business at the expense of another." By involving franchisees in development of new franchises, Arby's hopes to ward off the legal problems and conflicts that can haunt franchises.

When Grand Metropolitan, the British conglomerate, purchased Burger King from Pillsbury in January 1989, it made a concerted effort to establish strong relationships with franchisees, according to Michael Evans, company spokesperson for Burger King. Establishing a National Burger King Franchise Association served as the first step in creating communication lines between the franchise and its franchisees. Of Burger King's 5,400 domestic franchises, more than 85 percent are franchise-owned.

Burger King, however, offers no territories: the franchise is free to open any outlet wherever it chooses. But Evans notes that "it wouldn't make business sense to put a restaurant too close to another and cannibalize it. It would be like shooting yourself in the foot."

Burger King has managed, says Dick Fors, the president of its national franchisee association and owner of 50 restaurants in the western New York area, "to balance the need for market penetration with market potential for any given site. It has acted responsibly and been concerned with avoiding potential conflict with franchisees, by working with existing franchisees to open new stores." Its recently formed franchisee association has established a development/real estate committee to address issues of where units will open and how that affects existing franchisees. Discussion already has begun about compensating a franchisee when Burger King opens an outlet within its area.

Ways to control growth

In order to control growth, franchisors must study demographics, spot changes in the marketplace and recognize changing trends before placing a unit in a certain area, says John Campbell, CEO and founder of Franchise Masters Inc., a consulting firm in Minneapolis. Too many franchisors rest on their laurels and think that because the consumer wants a good burger today, he or she will want the same product tomorrow. Tastes change, and so should the companies that serve them.

Deciding on a growth rate is a complicated decision for a franchise. Ken Franklin, president of Franchise Developments, a consulting firm in Pittsburgh, believes a franchise must answer a host of questions: Does it have a competent management staff? Is it capable of handling operations and training? Can it offer sufficient assistance to franchisees? Has it solved all its operating problems? Are labor and food costs in line? Is there sufficient capital? Will royalty fees generate enough income for franchisees? Has market research been conducted to identify the market? Attorney Schreiber recommends building strong regional structures that can support any new franchisees.

Looki[illegible]ad

Looki[illegible] the 1990s, Campbell predicts that franchises will continue to grow but will be forced to monitor that growth.

To avoid oversaturation, Ron Sofranko of Red River Bar-B-Cue says that franchisors must believe in "controlled development with long steady growth. You need to avoid growing too quickly and burning out a lot of people." ❑

Gary Stern is a New York City writer.

FRANCHISE ADVISORY COUNCILS

BOARDROOMS RESOUND WITH IDEAS FROM THE FIELD

by Joan E. Herlong

Everyone acknowledges that communication is the key to good relations between franchisors and franchisees. But how can such communication be encouraged?

Fortunately, franchisors and franchisees have found a formal way to speak to one another: through franchise advisory councils made up of franchisees. These councils meet several times a year to discuss franchise company policies and how to carry them out.

Franchise representatives are either elected or appointed to advisory councils, usually for staggered two or three-year terms to preserve continuity. Some companies, such as Arby's, divide councils according to various aspects of business. Others, such as Hardee's, define councils by regions or marketing areas. At regional meetings, councils often break into smaller groups to discuss issues in greater detail.

Fred Koch is vice president of DORO Inc., which owns 25 Hardee's restaurants, and he serves as president of his area's advisory council. Koch says that licensees dictate the agenda for each quarterly meeting through letters and phone calls to their representatives. "For example," says Koch, "at our last meeting we discussed personnel issues in light of a minimum-wage increase in 1991. We were able to come up with a format to help set some wage structures."

Koch adds that council meetings are not necessarily limited to Hardee's franchisees and corporate coordinators. Quite often, guest speakers are invited to address specific issues on the agenda.

Service as an elected or appointed representative on advisory councils is voluntary and uncompensated, except for travel expenses. However, most franchisees view serving on a council as an opportunity as well as a responsibility. "People actively compete for seats on the councils," says Koch. "It is viewed as an opportunity as well as a responsibility. You learn so much."

Greg Matusky, a writer and reporter on the franchise industry in Ardmore, Pennsylvania, says that serving on a franchise advisory council often gives restaurateurs a chance to see the corporate side of franchise issues. "By the end of one's tenure on an advisory council, it is very common to see a franchisee become much more closely aligned with the corporate point of view than he is with the other franchisees," says Matusky. "The franchisee has had to put up with a lot of the same things that corporate does, such as dealing with franchisees who do not pull their own weight and do more complaining than contributing. Experience on the council helps [a franchisee] see both sides of the equation."

When corporations bring together their franchisees from all walks of business life, they capitalize on great assets of experience and expertise. Used to their full advantage, these councils can provide many of the benefits of an outside consulting group—without the expense.

Regular meetings between franchise representatives and corporate coordinators foster communication in more than one direction: between the corporation and its franchisees, and among franchisees themselves. As Tony Doyle, senior vice president of marketing for Le Peep restaurants, attests, "There are no minuses [to using advisory councils]. If you build a team approach, you have a greater chance of getting [franchisees] to understand your goals. If they understand your goals, you have a greater chance of meeting those goals. Plus, you get to deal with the native intelligence of the people who are out there every day in the street."

John Reynolds, vice president of marketing and public relations for the International Franchise Association in Washington DC, says, "More than 90 percent of our members use some form of advisory council system. Many companies form councils with as few as six units. Whether a company uses franchise advisory councils has more to do with a company's management style than its size."

How they work

As a rule, most franchise advisory councils meet quarterly. Flexibility, even in scheduling meetings, is important to a council's—and a company's—success. Greg Matusky offers a good example: "I know a company that is in some trouble right now. Usually their councils meet quarterly, but they've stepped it up to meeting every three weeks."

Dennis Willingham, group director of advertising for Arby's, says that Arby's councils meet according to various needs. "We have advisory councils for just about every aspect of business," says Willingham. The marketing advisory council and the menu council meet quarterly, and the operations council meets on an ad hoc basis. In addition to these councils, the marketing arm of Arby's is governed by a seven-person board of directors—all franchisees—elected by Arby's 475 franchisees. "They have authority over our entire marketing

program and they meet bimonthly at Atlanta headquarters," says Willingham.

Creating successful councils

The structure of any franchise advisory council depends chiefly on the needs and goals of the organization.

"It's important to set up bylaws as to how the councils will run," says Matusky. "How often will they meet? How much decision-making power will they have? How many representatives will be seated?

"You need to decide on voting power: if one franchisee owns ten stores, will he have ten votes, or just one vote? Determine what happens in the event of a seat vacancy. If you are a national company, decide whether you want regional councils, too. The franchisor must set up bylaws to control these entities. If the franchisor doesn't, the franchisees will. The crux of the structure is to provide a legitimate forum for airing issues, ideas and grievances. If you do that, the franchisees are usually content."

No matter how comprehensive the bylaws, without sincere corporate support an advisory council will not only fail, but backfire, says Matusky. "Commit to it," he says. "Promote the council in your newsletter. Keep minutes of all council meetings and send copies to all your franchisees. Highlight individuals whose ideas are being discussed at council meetings."

The purpose served

As the name implies, the role of franchise advisory councils is largely to discuss and advise the restaurant franchise on various issues. Most councils have no official decision-making power in that they do not set corporate policy. However, Hardee's franchisee Koch says, "You could say we have a kind of veto power. If we're not sold on an idea or program from corporate, the idea cannot work."

Overall, however, councils promote teamwork—even when there is disagreement. John Gray, vice president for marketing for RTM, a major Arby's franchisee, says, "When you have ownership in a decision—even if you don't agree with the ultimate decision, and sometimes we don't—it's much easier to trust that decision."

> Councils can provide many of the benefits of an outside consulting group—without the expense.

Franchise advisory councils provide an excellent forum for brainstorming, test marketing and troubleshooting. Koch recalls several new menu items that Hardee's corporate had put on the table for review during one council meeting. "Some of us felt we were moving too quickly without enough information," remembers Koch. "So we got together with corporate and said, 'Whoa, we're moving too quick on this.' We were able to reschedule the timetable without putting the kibosh on the whole thing—and without ruffling any feathers, either." Without the official conduit of the advisory council, says Koch, a simple difference of opinion between licensees and the corporate structure could be a lot more complicated.

What's in it for corporate?

Through the advisory council, franchisees gain a voice that corporate headquarters will hear. But what does the parent corporation get in return?

Arby's Willingham prefers to answer the question in terms of what a company without advisory councils stands to lose. "It would be a shame not to take advantage of the knowledge, background and expertise of our franchisees," says Willingham. "The advisory councils are very important in terms of making sure that the policies and procedures we develop have a place in the real world. The councils reduce the possibility of making expensive mistakes."

RTM's Gray adds, "Advisory councils help avoid the 'ivory tower syndrome.' It's easy for me, as a marketer, to lose sight of the forest for the trees. The councils are a vital link, keeping us in touch with real-world considerations and the people who have daily contact with the customer."

In addition, the franchise advisory council gives a company, regardless of its size, a forum for addressing problems. "I've seen big problems in a franchise—problems that could divide an entire company—resolved through the council system," notes Greg Matusky. "Small companies can use advisory councils as a great resource that might otherwise be out of their reach."

Because franchisors that form advisory councils give franchisees a voice that may strongly affect policy, the only corporations to profit from advisory councils are those that acknowledge they cannot solve every problem alone. Fred Koch underscores the point: "It takes a confident corporate structure to allow this forum to happen. It's essentially admitting they don't have all the answers."

Matusky, however, points out that using advisory councils is not just a matter of corporate headquarters giving up responsibility. "You can use councils to make sure that the franchisor stays in touch with the consumer," says Matusky. "For example, a new TV commercial was produced and shown to an advisory council. One guy on the council raised his hand and said, 'There are no blacks in this spot. My traffic is 80 percent minorities.' " It is this sort of information that is as valuable to corporate headquarters as it is to franchisees.

The best way

"It's only as valuable as you make it," says Matusky of a franchise advisory council. "I have seen companies set councils up without committing to the idea. Some corporate executives think an advisory council will placate franchisees. But if it is not a legitimate structure, the franchisees will become bitter. It's amazing how hard it is to listen in franchising. There is always that dogmatism of 'we know better,' or 'we've done that before and it didn't work.' Setting up a legitimate council system is probably the best way to avoid that pitfall." ❑

Joan Herlong is a freelance writer in Greenville, South Carolina.

A CHEF'S CONDI

With a little creativity and culinary inspiration, innovative condiments can transform a merry-go-round menu into an exciting amusement ride. Spoon pineapple salsa over fish, or rhubarb chutney over chicken, and the humdrum meal becomes sophisticated and delectable. Condiments add versatility, flair and intrigue to a restaurant's menu.

I have become a condiment connoisseur. I fill my days preparing salsa, Creole sauce, chutney and garlicky aioli. From fiery red chile sauces to piquant mustards, my restaurant menu reads like a hit parade of condiments.

There are seven major groups of condiments: salsas, chutneys, catsups, relishes, mayonnaises, mustards and international condiments. Most are quick and easy to prepare, don't require esoteric cooking techniques and can be made ahead of time, enabling dishes to be quickly assembled. Condiments can be spooned over a finished entree at the last minute or served on the side at the table.

Salsa, which means "sauce" in Spanish, is a traditional Mexican condiment. The most common form of salsa is the loose peppery tomato dip that is served with tortilla chips at Mexican restaurants. Salsa, however, is much, much more than a tomato dip. There are a variety of fruits and vegetables that make tantalizing salsas: peaches, raspberries, kiwis, pineapples, papayas and tomatillos, for example.

The spirit of salsa depends upon the spicy and sour sensations of jalapeno peppers, lime juice and fresh cilantro. This trio of flavors leaves a well-rounded zing at the tip of the tongue.

Tomatoes and tomatillos make the heartiest salsas for accompanying traditional Mexican dishes such as burritos and quesadillas. Fresh-fruit salsas stimulate and cleanse the palate, and are ideally served with light entrees such as grilled salmon, trout, halibut, chicken and steamed vegetables.

Chutney is a vinegar-based condiment rooted in Indian cuisine. It is an aromatic blend of fruit, onion and vinegar, accented with ginger, garlic, curry seasonings and hot spices. Savory and refreshing, chutney covers a wide spectrum of taste including sweet, tart, hot and sour. Apples, pears, cranberries, pineapples, tomatoes, peaches, rhubarb and mangoes are some of the fruits that create complex, strongly flavored chutneys.

For the chef, chutney is a dream come true. It is as easy to prepare as soup, has a long shelf life, and is a healthy alternative to rich, elaborate sauces such as hollandaise or bearnaise. Chutney has no cholesterol or fat, and negligible salt, and it reverberates with a gastronomical kaleidoscope of flavors and textures.

Chutneys can be ladled over grilled chicken, fish and pork, or served with roast lamb, game hens and prime rib. Curry dishes, soups, pasta salads and salad dressings also benefit from an infusion of chutneys. Chutney's appealing flavors and growing popularity may make it the trendy "pesto" of the '90s.

Catsup is on the threshold of a culinary renaissance. Although most people think of catsup as the bottled tomato condiment, there is a growing appetite for upscale, adventurous catsups. Whenever I offer a special with a flavored catsup, such as grilled chicken with pesto catsup, it rapidly sells out. People are rarely offered an alternative to the mass-produced variety, but they are quick to indulge when the opportunity arises.

Catsup is a simple blend of vinegar, fruit, onion, and honey or sugar, and it is easy to improvise. There are a wide variety of fruits, both dried and fresh, that yield wonderful, richly flavored catsups. I have served catsups flavored with sun-dried tomatoes, jalapenos, dried dates, dried apricots, garlic and fresh herbs, as well as fruity catsups prepared with rhubarb, plums and peaches. Catsups complement entrees as diverse as prime rib, roasted garlic potatoes, turkey, omelets and—of course—hamburgers and fries.

Relishes are another condiment that I have slightly revised to accommodate today's palate. Like chutney and catsup, relish is made with vinegar, fruit, vegetables and sugar. Relishes are usually sweeter than chutneys and catsups, with just a hint of tartness. The flavors of the individual ingredients are more pronounced and less blended.

Eggplants, beets, jicamas, figs, dates, apricots, bananas and nuts are some of the ingredients that I incor-

PINEAPPLE-KIWI SALSA

Yield: 3 cups

Ingredients:
½ medium-size pineapple, peeled, cored and diced
4 kiwis, peeled and diced
1 fresh red chile pepper, seeded and minced
1 Tbs. minced fresh cilantro
1 Tbs. lemon juice or lime juice

Method:
Combine all of the ingredients in a bowl and mix well. Chill for at least 2 hours before serving. If refrigerated, salsa should keep for 4 to 5 days.

Serve with mildly flavored fish such as salmon or mahimahi.

—Courtesy of Jay Solomon

Nutritional analysis per tablespoon: 8 calories, less than 1 gram protein, 2 grams carbohydrate, less than 1 gram fat, less than 1 mg. sodium, 0 mg. cholesterol

MENU PRIMER

by Jay Solomon

porate into relishes. Jicama-corn, beet-cucumber, cranberry-fruit (sweetened with maple syrup) and banana-date are relishes with intense colors and flavors. These relishes complement a variety of entrees: marinated fish and chicken, roast pork, game hens and turkey. Relishes also make tangy toppings for vegetables, baked squash or potatoes, and leafy salads.

A homemade mayonnaise is luscious and velvety. With the proliferation of food processors, mayonnaise has become quick and easy to prepare. Blend a few pasteurized egg yolks with lemon or lime juice and mustard, drizzle oil in and—presto—the job is complete. With another short step, it's easy to create flavored mayonnaises such as horseradish, tropical, jalapeno-pimento, spinach-dill and aioli (a classic French garlicky version of mayonnaise).

Flavored mayonnaises are more than luxurious sandwich spreads. They can be spooned as a sauce over broiled fish, shellfish, chicken and filet mignon. A popular dish on my menu is sauteed scallops with spinach aioli; the scallops are sauteed, tossed with broccoli and served in a casserole dish. The chilled aioli is spooned over the scallops before serving, and it gently oozes over the shellfish. The dish is easy to prepare and exudes an enticing fragrance.

Mustards are the granddaddy of condiments, developed about 2,000 years ago. Yet until recently, mustard was primarily used for sandwiches, hot dogs and soft pretzels. Ten years ago, Dijon-style mustard was considered an esoteric ingredient. As eating trends veered toward more highly seasoned foods, cooks began using sharp, piquant mustards in sauces, salad dressings and soups. Lately, Dijon-style mustard has become de rigueur in most kitchens.

Mustard is derived from the seeds of the mustard plant. The two most common seeds are white (or yellow) and brown seeds. The seeds themselves are deceptively tame. But once they are crushed and mixed with water or another liquid to form a paste, they release a powerful, nose-tingling sensation. Introducing mild flavors such as apple, pear, champagne or honey to the mustard helps reduce the bite. A small amount of turmeric will give mustard its familiar bright yellow color.

Mustard sauces make a versatile accompaniment to chicken, pork, soy-marinated beef and fish.

There are myriad international condiments that I serve periodically as specials. Indian raita, Greek yogurt sauce and herbed tahini sauce are soothing condiments, while North African harissa, Caribbean pepper sauce and spicy lime-peanut sauce are fiery. I often offer international condiments in tandem with a contrasting condiment, such as raita with chutney, or lime-peanut dressing with champagne-honey mustard. This further expands the dimension of the meal and allows the guest to control the degree of exotic flavors.

The best way to merchandise condiments is to place the condiment's name in the title of a meal: Cumin-Grilled Salmon with Pineapple-Kiwi Salsa, Harvest Chicken with Rhubarb Chutney or Roasted Garlic Potatoes with Sun-Dried Tomato Catsup. An ordinary dish such as broiled haddock can be transformed into Tropical Haddock with Papaya Salsa. Steamed asparagus and carrots becomes Warm Spring Salad with Beet-Cucumber Relish.

Once you discover fruity chutneys and catsups, feisty salsas, bold new relishes, flavored mayonnaises and mustards, and exotic international condiments, you'll say goodbye to gooey gravy and fragile hollandaise. Your menu will become a litany of mouth-watering selections. The creative use of condiments throws the door open to healthy and innovative meals perfect for our times. ❑

Jay Solomon is the author of Condiments! Chutneys, Relishes, and Table Sauces, *published by the Crossing Press. He is also the chef and owner of Jay's Clinton Hall Cafe in Ithaca, New York.*

Art by Liz Dalgetty

SUN-DRIED TOMATO CATSUP

Yield: 2 cups

Ingredients:
3 ozs. sun-dried tomatoes
(about 36 dried tomatoes)
6 cups boiling water
3 fresh tomatoes, diced
6 garlic cloves, minced
¼ cup minced onion
½ cup red wine vinegar
⅓ cup pure maple syrup
1 Tbs. brown sugar
½ tspn. salt
¼ tspn. white pepper

Method:
Place the dried tomatoes in the boiling water for 2 minutes, drain, and discard the soaking water. (If the tomatoes are packed in oil, you can skip this step.)

Combine all of the ingredients and cook over medium heat for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Reduce the heat to low and cook for 3 to 5 minutes, or until the mixture is thick and chunky. Remove from the heat and let stand for 5 minutes. Pour into a food processor or blender and blend for 15 seconds, or until smooth.

Serve the catsup immediately or wrap and chill. If refrigerated, the catsup should keep for about 2 weeks.

—*Courtesy of Jay Solomon*

Nutritional analysis per tablespoon: 20 calories, less than 1 gram protein, 5 grams carbohydrate, less than 1 gram fat, 92 mg. sodium, 0 mg. cholesterol

TWO FOR THE ROAD

DOUBLE DRIVE-THR

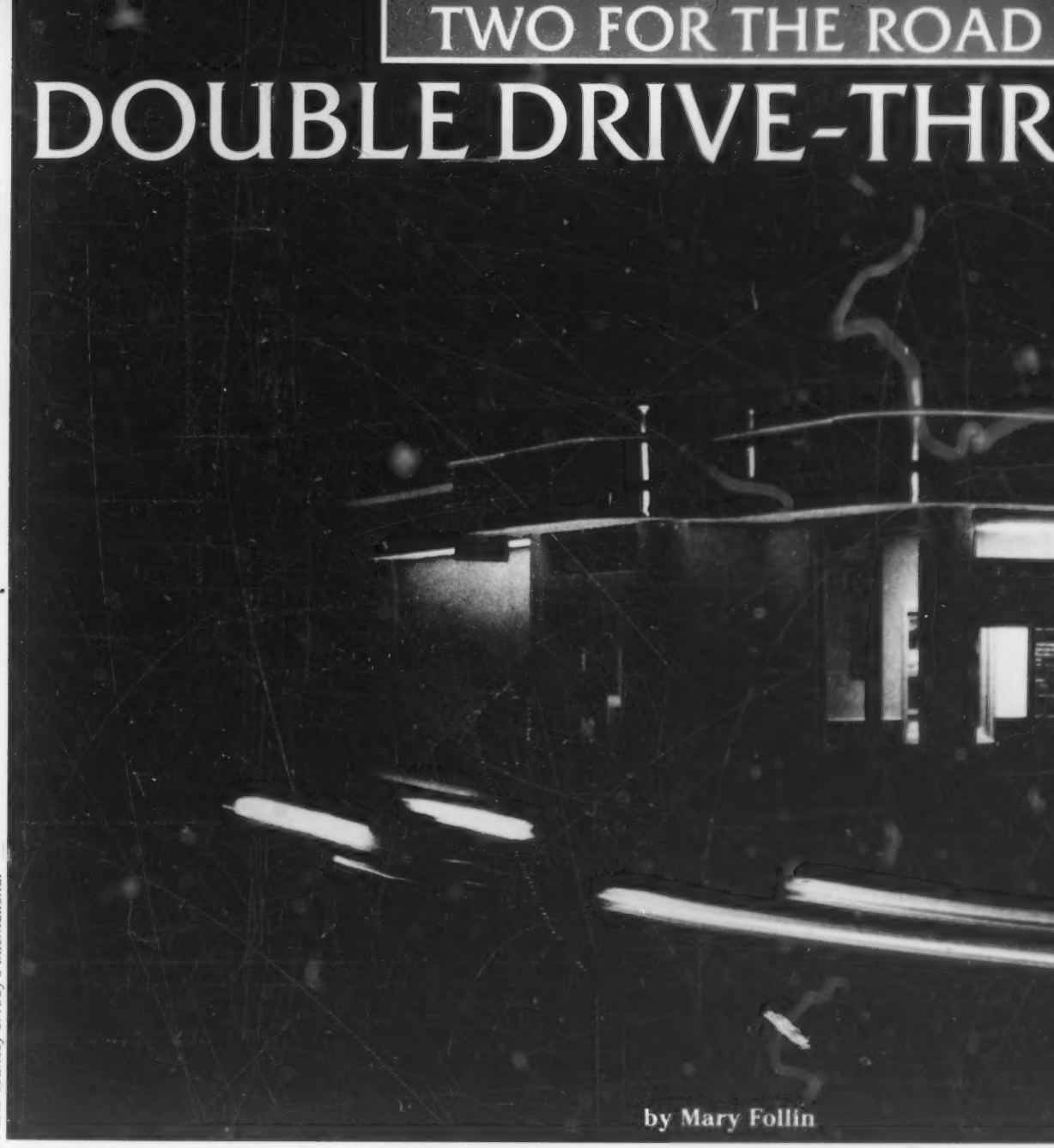


Photo courtesy of Arby's International

by Mary Follin

With units that are sleeker and simpler than ever,' double drive-thru restaurant chains are making in- roads across America.

If drive-thru service is what today's convenience-minded customer demands, then a double drive-thru must be more of a good thing. In response to the need for speed, many franchise operators have invested in the double drive-thru concept. For some, the double drive-thru merely increases speed of service; for others, it helps make the most of a small location.

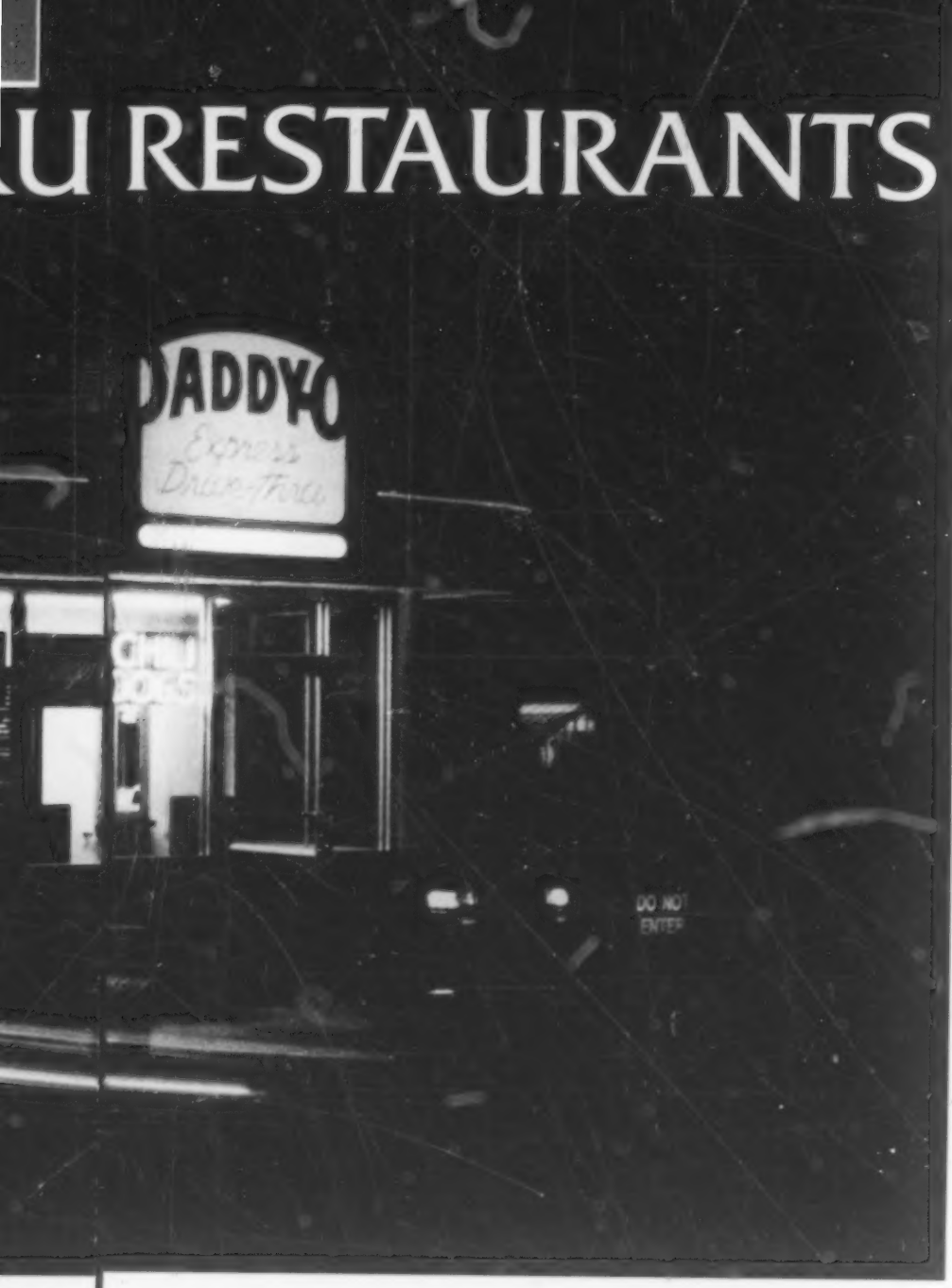
A quick definition

Simply stated, a double drive-thru is a restaurant that has two drive-thru windows or drive-thru service lanes. But franchise operators have found more than one way to carry out the concept.

Houston-based Two Pesos is a Mexican-food chain that uses a combination of sit-down dining and double drive-thru service to satisfy customers. Most Two Pesos restaurants provide approximately 150 seats for guests in a dining room and a double drive-thru for guests on the go. A mini-version of the restaurant, know as Two Pesos II, is strictly double drive-thru, with a small amount of p tio seating for those who want to pa the car and eat at a table.

One unique feature of the Two Pe sos concept is the carriage system that delivers food to the outside drive-thru lane. The two drive-thru

U RESTAURANTS



lanes at each restaurant are parallel and on the same side of the restaurant. One lane is served directly at the window, while the other is served by a conveyor belt that carries food on a track over the heads of those in the first line. The method is similar to service at the outside lane of a drive-thru bank. A customer's order is delivered in a basket, and the customer places money in a tray on the basket.

"The carriage system is a gimmick," says Don Malone, a district manager of Two Pesos in Houston. "People choose the outside lane just to watch their food come over the conveyor belt." According to Malone, Two Pesos has even jazzed up its unique method of delivery by illuminating the outside lane with Christmas lights to attract customers.

Small-site double drive-thrus

A different double drive-thru setup is used by Louisville, Kentucky–based Rally's and by Checkers, a drive-thru-only chain based in Clearwater, Florida. These hamburger chains use the "twin" method of operating duplicate service windows on each side of a small building. Popular in the Southeast and on the West Coast, Checkers has recently opened three restaurants on Chicago's South Side and plans to operate 24 units throughout the area by the end of 1992. In addition to the two drive-thru windows, Checkers restaurants feature two walk-up windows, as well as outdoor patio seating.

According to T.J. Singer (president) and Charles Lamb (chief operating officer) of Chicago Double Drive-Thru, Inc., between 15 and 20 percent of Checkers' business is walk-up, with all the remaining revenue generated by drive-thru customers. "Our concept puts the 'fast' back in fast food," says Singer. Checkers' double drive-thru-only restaurants deliver quick food at a relatively low price necessary to capture the drive-thru market. According to Singer, Checkers is not in the business of providing a "dining experience." The objective of the double drive-thru concept is to satisfy the customer's demand for fast, uncomplicated service.

When the focus is drive-thru

Speed is the number-one goal of most double drive-thru restaurants. According to Ronald Petty, president and CEO of Miami Subs, studies indicate that customer satisfaction diminishes rapidly if a drive-thru meal is not delivered within four minutes.

One way of delivering food within that time frame is to keep the menu limited. Daddy-O's Express Drive-Thru restaurants, an Atlanta–based chain recently purchased by Arby's, keeps their menu short and simple so as not to impede speed of service.

"We serve hamburgers, chili dogs, chicken sandwiches and chili—and that's about it," says Tom Whitley, senior vice president of marketing for Daddy-O's franchising. "We service most of our customers at a rate of 30 seconds or less." Most Daddy-O's have two drive-thrus and a walk-up window, as well as a five-foot by 20-foot dining area with a counter and four stools. Whitley attributes the speed of service to, among other things, ease of ordering and preparation that are the result of an uncomplicated menu.

Beyond barking

Although speed is of the essence, many double drive-thru establishments are committed to hospitality as well. Checkers lists friendly service as paramount to the success of its double drive-thrus. When business is predominantly drive-thru, the customer may feel the transaction is an impersonal "barking" of directions through a speaker and may miss the more personal touch of an over-the-counter transaction.

"We address this concern by constant supervision of window personnel," says Charles Lamb of Checkers. Employees are continually reminded to extend hospitality so that customers don't feel alienated.

According to Malone of Two Pesos, order accuracy is another factor that takes on greater importance in the drive-thru business. When a mistake is made inside a restaurant, a customer may simply return to the counter to fix the problem. But if an error is made at a drive-thru, the customer usually reaches his or her point of destination before discovering the order is wrong. To the disgruntled customer, a missing taco may not justify a return trip to the store, but the customer will certainly be annoyed—sometimes permanently—with the establishment.

Ron Petty of Miami Subs also believes that correctness of orders is key to the success of a double drive-thru. According to Petty, inaccuracy can be more damaging than the improved speed is beneficial. "If a small amount of speed needs to be sacrificed for increased accuracy, it should be done," he says.

Other issues that double drive-thru establishments must consider are packaging, portability of food and heat retention. Customers will not sacrifice quality for a quick meal. In fact, customers are expecting better quality these days.

Traffic patterns are also a part of double drive-thru planning considerations. Double drive-thrus have more cars coming and going at the same time, and access must be quick and easy. "Our goal is to keep people on the parking lot as little as possible," says Graydon Webb, managing director of franchising at St. Louis-based Zipps Drive Thru, Inc. Zipps, located in six states, has one service window on each side of a 650-square-foot building. According to Webb, Zipps views a car on the lot as "renting space." Speed of service and easy entry and exit more quickly frees space for new "renters."

One final consideration unique to double drive-thrus is scheduling staff to most economically operate two windows or lanes. According to Petty of Miami Subs, duplicate staffing would be wasteful during many operating hours. "The largest payback of a double drive-thru occurs during peak hours," says Petty. "The trick is to determine the time of day staff can be cut back or when the second window or line should be closed."

Real estate efficiency

One of the most attractive aspects of the double drive-thru business is the small amount of real estate required to establish and operate the business. For a traditional fast food establishment with one drive-thru window, the addition of an eight-foot lane on the other side of the building brings a relatively high return on investment. Double drive-thru-only restaurants, which don't even require a parking lot, have minimal total real estate requirements that are hard to rival for any retail business.

"Basically, a double drive-thru-only is a kitchen without a dining room," says Webb of Zipps Drive Thru, Inc. "The space requirements are drastically reduced, overhead is reduced, and ultimately, prices can be reduced." Webb estimates that a double drive-thru-only building takes approximately one-half to one-third the square footage of a conventional fast food restaurant.

Singer and Lamb of Checkers agree. "We can squeeze into places other businesses couldn't possibly fit," says Singer. He comments that the small size requirement offers the flexibility to penetrate markets where previously a fast food establishment could not go. Double drive-thrus can be built on real estate that is not considered prime because a double drive-thru-only can be located out on a shopping-center pad without obstructing the view of other stores.

Construction costs, too, can be low. Beefy's, Inc., of Nashville, Tennessee, takes advantage of the small space requirements of a double drive-thru by using modular buildings that can be constructed at the site in less than a week. Beefy's has almost 30 locations in seven states.

"We can use the modular approach only because we are a double drive-thru and our building requirements are so simple," says E.F. Griswold, director of franchising services for Beefy's. The company saves money on construction and offers consistency and easy recognition to its patrons. Even the inside of a Beefy's building is created for efficiency. Equipment and work stations are strategically located to facilitate processing orders as smoothly as possible.

"We don't want people bumping into each other," says Griswold. According to Griswold, order processing moves in a semicircle instead of crisscrossing back and forth. The grill is next to sandwich prep so that meat does not need to be carried 10 feet to be made into a sandwich.

Daddy-O's of Atlanta is also engineered around order-processing efficiency. According to Whitley of Daddy-O's, the insides of its buildings are engineered for the double drive-thru concept.

"We build our kitchens around the grill like a plane is built around an engine," says Whitley. With professional engineering assistance, Daddy-O's kitchens were designed to leave no wasted space. The entire operation is built in assembly-line fashion so that employees can be expected to meet a service rate of 30 seconds or less per car.

Exit

The double drive-thru concept is returning fast food to its roots, with low-priced fare and quick service at the top of the agenda. By operating drive-thrus in duplicate, establishments are delivering fast food more quickly—without sacrificing quality, accuracy or friendly service. ❑

Mary Follin is a freelance writer in Falls Church, Virginia.

SHOPPING-MALL RESTAURANTS

Restaurateurs and retailers are joining forces for a symbiosis of success.

by Dorothy Dee

Americans love shopping malls. Americans love good food. It's no wonder, then, that good food and shopping malls got together. The surprise is in the way the two concepts have grown together.

In the early days of shopping malls, shoppers had scant opportunities for food on the premises. The culinary options available were about as limited as those at a high school football stadium: hot dogs off the grill, maybe a pretzel from a vending cart or lunch-counter fare in the resident drug store. The mall was certainly not the place to open a fine-dining restaurant.

But these days, shopping malls are cornucopias of epicurean delight. Food courts and midscale restaurants offer a quick fix of everything from frozen yogurt to exotic ethnic foods. Fine-dining mall establishments employ skilled chefs who prepare the type of haute cuisine associated with a night on the town. Mall developers are sometimes willing to offer financial inducements to lure fine restaurants as tenants.

Destination restaurants

Whether midscale or fine-dining, restaurants have become important keys to drawing crowds of customers to mall sites after shopping hours—when retail centers might otherwise be dormant.

Hemmings is an upscale restaurant located in the Saddle Creek Center in Germantown, Tennessee, an affluent suburb of Memphis. The center boasts about 50 shops and also includes restaurants such as Ruby Tuesday, Silver Spoon and L&N Seafood. Hemmings is a dinner-only establishment serving nouvelle American cuisine, and owner Paul Westphal says the 125-seat restaurant performs a

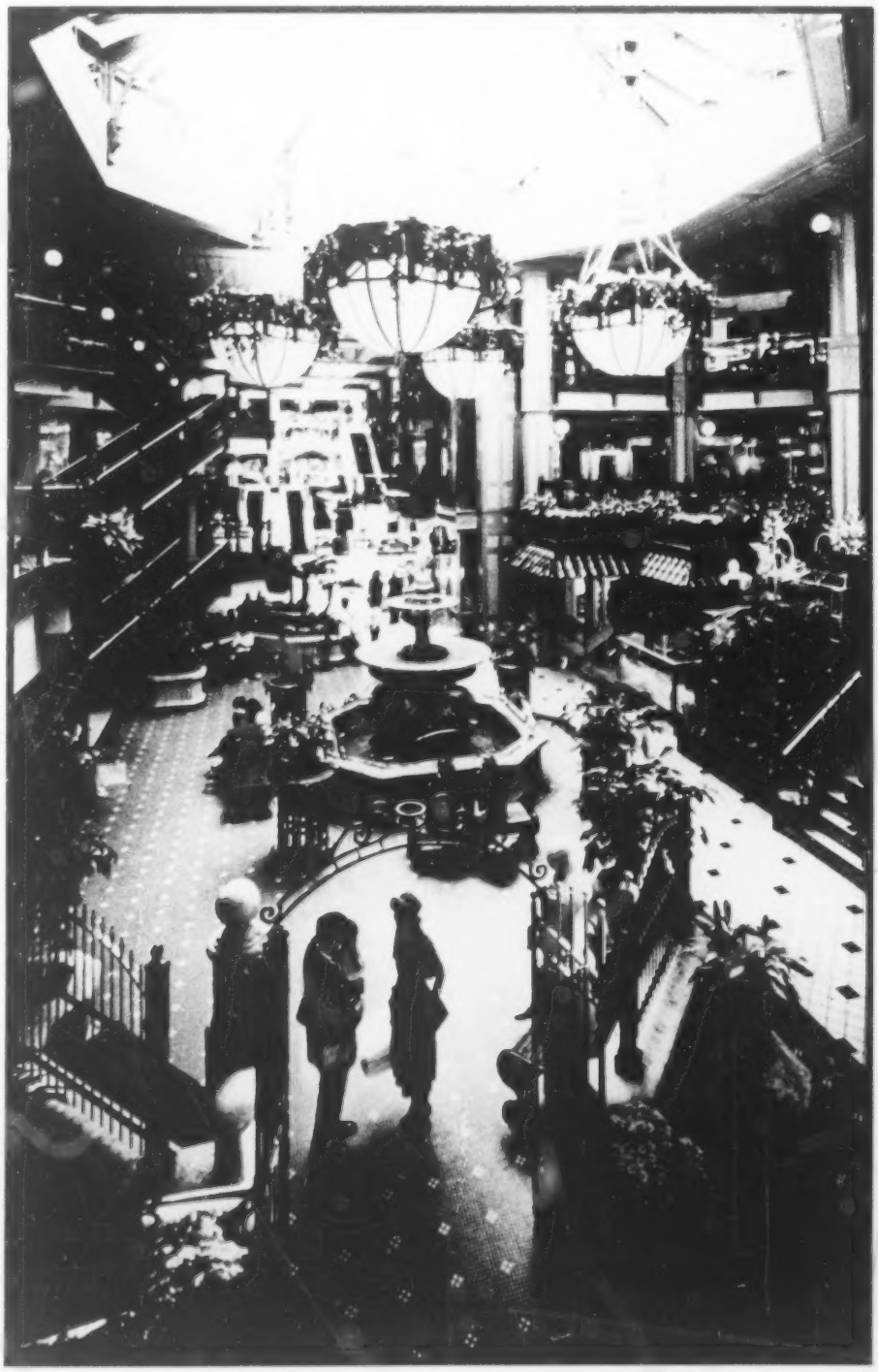


Photo courtesy of Georgetown Park

role for the mall. "We are a destination restaurant, and we attract traffic for the mall's small specialty stores," he says. Hemmings, it seems, has found an upscale home in the mall.

In Southern California, the 100-seat St. Estephe restaurant in Manhattan Beach is part of the Manhattan Village Shopping Center, which draws affluent customers from Beverly Hills, Encino and Manhattan Beach. These diners pay an average of $120 for a dinner for two and $40 for lunch to dine on signature items such as steamed salmon on a bed of shallot cream sauce, with purees of sorrel and red chiles.

In Chicago, midscale restaurant Tucci Benucch, located in the 900 North Michigan Avenue Mall, reports that dinner sales (which reflect neighborhood popularity) are way above expectations. In this 175-seat restaurant, which resembles a home in the Italian countryside, diners have the option of eating in one of several rooms: the bedroom, living room, kitchen, mudroom, sunroom or patio. General Manager Eric Engle says, "We thought it would mainly be lunch business—the shoppers and businesspeople. Dinner was our biggest surprise. We didn't realize that people would be going out to a mall for dinner."

All three of the above restaurants have been part of the movement that has pushed mall dining beyond the concession-stand level.

Developers may be looking for you

Because of America's love of dining out, savvy developers have determined that a high-quality restaurant can be as important as a popular department store to the success of a mall. "We want a restaurant mix that will complement our market and be a place that our customer will be comfortable with," says Terry McEwen, president of the commercial real estate company Poag & McEwen in Memphis.

Quality, price and the existing restaurant mix are important considerations for The Rouse Company of Columbia, Maryland, when looking for a restaurant for a development site. "We look for a quality operation," says Cathy Lickteig, vice president and director of corporate public affairs for The Rouse Company. Other key factors in recruiting restaurant tenants include the experience level of a restaurateur and the freshness of a restaurant's concept. "You also look for something you don't have," says Lickteig. "If you are in an urban area, you want to round out your ethnic mix."

> Restaurants have become keys to drawing crowds to malls after shopping hours.

When considering a shopping-mall site, restaurateurs must consider the goals of a project's developers. Specifically, developers may seek to boost a mall's image to upscale by adding fine dining to its retail mix. Developer Terry McEwen says, "We like to supplement [a mall] with a fine-dining restaurant like Hemmings that will draw people from all over." Developers are interested, for instance, in drawing customers from hotels and from out of town; Hemmings is a restaurant that serves that purpose. "We get a lot of business entertainment customers there," says McEwen. "We get people that might not normally shop at the center because they live far away. Because of the restaurant they will make a trip there."

McEwen says that Hemmings' elite customers window-shop through the center after a meal and are a factor in attracting potential tenants to the center. "They [the stores] are exposed to the better-income customers of the restaurant on a regular basis."

What developers may give

How much could it be worth to a developer to have a fine restaurant in the mall? It may be worth enough for them to offer restaurateurs a deal. Developers seeking to attract the right restaurant will sometimes offer financial incentives. These might be in the form of construction funds to erect the restaurant or to improve the existing structure. Developers may also contribute to the FF&E (furniture, fixtures and equipment) package.

Bill Allen, president of the restaurant division of Errant Enterprises in Northbrook, Illinois, adds that tough times for developers may mean that additional incentives are available. "Developers are having a difficult time of it," Allen says. He notes that the type of deals offered to Errant Enterprises lately "are a lot more flexible than they were a couple of years ago." Negotiable elements cited by Allen include the amount of money malls are willing to invest in projects, their willingness to negotiate terms like per square foot costs and the percent of sales that an operation must pay the mall.

When Actuelle co-owner Clive O'Donoghue leased space in Dallas' Quadrangle four years ago, he was attracted to the space's spectacular glass-enclosed atrium. "This is a most unique space," says O'Donoghue. "Restaurants are attracted to malls because the developer might do something special and you could get into a space at a price that otherwise you might not get."

The lure of the suburbs

Another possible advantage of a mall location is the fact that malls are often "built where the money is." Errant Enterprises operates three concepts in five locations in the Chicago area, and all are in shopping malls. "We made a conscious decision to go into more upscale areas in order to minimize economic downturns," says Bill Allen. He adds that the company avoided the wintertime blues because of the mall locations. "All of our restaurants did above-average projections over the holidays. If we had not been in mall locations and had missed out on those five weeks of increased sales, our sales would have been much lower."

Suburban shopping sites are often situated on prime real estate, amid affluent communities where median incomes may run from $50,000 to $70,000. "Our draw is geography," says developer Terry McEwen of the Saddle Creek mall in suburban Mem-

phis. "We are in the heart of the best income of the Memphis market." If a developer has done the proper homework with regard to planning a mall in the right part of town, then the favorable demographic location can help a tenant restaurant, too.

Another practical consideration is parking. Restaurants need parking, and many shopping malls have it—especially after hours when a restaurant needs it most. According to Bob Lerner, vice president of retail services of the Washington DC commercial brokerage firm Smithy Braedon, "The suburbs are the hottest thing [for restaurants] in the last 10 years, and parking is what drives it."

Mall drawbacks

Once a shopping mall is established, restaurant locations are limited—and that is one of the difficulties of opening a shopping-mall restaurant. Lerner points out that a restaurant usually can't pay as much rent as a jewelry store can, so the landlord takes the restaurant and puts it where less-costly land is. As a result, says Lerner, "The restaurateur will not get in the center. He may be put on a pad—detached and out on the highway."

Space considerations are an important factor affecting The Rouse Company's search for quality restaurants to enhance the existing retail mix of their developments. Cathy Lickteig of The Rouse Company, which has 80 retail properties across the country, says, "You don't have your choice of space. You can't move somebody else to accommodate the restaurant. You have to work with the space available. Other special considerations are ventilation and whether or not the restaurant will bother neighbors with noise or crowds."

Operating in a shopping mall may have some artistic drawbacks such as having to live within the decor constraints of the shopping complex. Management at Tucci Benucch, however, was able to negotiate with the landlord for creative leeway. Eric Engle says, "We got some freedom that allowed us to vary the restaurant's appearance from the rest of the mall. For instance, awnings throughout the mall are solid green, whereas our awnings have vines going through them." In general, however, restaurateurs may have trouble obtaining variances from shopping-mall landlords.

Developers may seek to boost a mall's image to upscale by adding fine dining to its retail mix.

The urban mall

Although the suburbs are hot, they are not the only game in town. Mixed-use complexes in the midst of urban areas with access to mass transit are attracting retailers, restaurateurs and legions of customers.

A big change in the last few decades has been the "upscaling" of many shopping malls. In addition to restaurants and retailers, some mixed-use complexes sport hotels, floors of office space and sometimes even luxury condos. These built-in traffic generators are likely to benefit all building tenants and offer restaurateurs a good base of customers for all meal periods.

The 900 North Michigan Avenue Mall in Chicago's glitzy "Gold Coast" neighborhood exemplifies the mixed-use urban complex with a hotel. The mall, which is anchored by Bloomingdale's and Henri Bendel, includes the Four Seasons Hotel (with its four foodservice operations), Tucci Benucch, the Claim Co., Carnegie Deli, Boden Sourdough Bakery, movie theaters and a number of retailers. This mix of retailers generates an amount of activity that far exceeds that of the traditional "open 10 to 6" shopping mall. Jill Gosden, senior director of marketing for the Four Seasons, says, "Our hotel guests enjoy the benefit of the mall and its restaurants. The mall enjoys the benefits of our hotel guests, and we enjoy the benefit of shoppers patronizing our restaurants."

Gosden notes that the hotel works with other restaurants to give them business when Four Seasons restaurants are full. Similarly, Tucci Benucch manager Eric Engle says, "We have a great rapport with the concierge of the Four Seasons and other hotels in the neighborhood. On a personal basis, I meet the concierges and invite them to our restaurant. We are also open and receptive to getting their people in on Saturday night."

Restaurants take over the mall

Part of a new mall formula put forth by developers is to make malls into entertainment centers instead of just shopping outlets. Bursting onto the scene recently are malls boasting entertainment, restaurants and retail components such as the new mixed-use urban complex in Phoenix known as Arizona Center.

This downtown 18-acre project incorporates office space (in two buildings) and retail space, half of which is a 75,000-square-foot restaurant and entertainment section.

A key attraction motivating residents from suburban areas to travel to the downtown area is the dining and entertainment area, which offers an array of restaurants and clubs, including a sports bar, sing-along bar, variety club, daiquiri bar, espresso bar and cafe, and a large country-western club.

Tom Fitzpatrick, senior leasing representative for The Rouse Company says, "Collectively this is a destination site, and it is restaurant-driven. We knew it would be hard to motivate people to drive 20 to 25 minutes past 10 malls just to shop." Consequently, the restaurant-based mall concept was chosen.

Shopping-mall dining has come a long way, but a mall location alone is no guarantee of success for the restaurateur. In fact, as shopping malls continue to pervade urban areas, restaurant competition in malls will continue to increase. Consequently, all the usual rules for restaurant success will apply. Knowledge of the market, assessment of the competition and the ability to offer a fresh concept will be as important as the location. ❑

Dorothy Dee is the owner of Written Well, a writing and public relations firm in Bethesda, Maryland.

CHOICE ALTERNATIVES FOR LEAN TIMES

COOKING WITH LOW-COST CUTS OF MEAT

Humble cuts of meat, prepared with skill, are moving to the center of the plate—with no apologies from the chef. These cuts win top marks for flavor and nutrition while helping chefs cut food costs to the bone.

by Toni Lydecker

What do braised lamb shanks, grilled pot roast and a pork ragout have in common? All are winning the kind of star billing on menus that used to be reserved for a tenderloin steak or veal loin chop.

On a recent "green sheet" (a weekly report on meat prices), the lamb shanks, beef chuck and pork shoulder used to make the above menu items weighed in at less than $1.50 per pound. Prices in that range are as welcome as a party of free-spending conventioneers on a Tuesday night to worried chefs and owners looking for ways to contain food costs.

Expanding a menu's range of meats beyond high-priced, sought-after prime meats can also be accomplished through more economical product utilization. Operators can still order convenient, portion-cut meat, but they also have the option of "fabricating" a whole shoulder of beef or leg of lamb in the kitchen by cutting it up for use in several different ways.

There are reasons besides cost trimming for the current popularity of restaurant dishes made with cheaper cuts of beef, lamb, pork and veal. Chief among these reasons is the extraordinary range of dishes that can be made. "With an expensive cut, you tend to keep the preparation simple to show off the meat's flavor and texture," says restaurateur Drew Allen, of Liberty Bar in San Antonio, Texas. "You have to do more things to cheap meat to extract the flavor—and often the results are more interesting."

From down-home to elegant

All over America, chefs are getting creative with modest cuts of meat. Take pork, for instance. Chef Edna Lewis of Gage & Tollner in Brooklyn uses smoked pork shoulder, "streak-of-lean" or smoked bacon in her 13-bean soup. The recipe, which appears in her cookbook *In Pursuit of Flavor*, is simple, hearty and down-to-earth. Carolyn Buster, chef and co-owner of The Cottage in Calumet City, Illinois, opts for sophistication in a ragout that combines modestly priced pork loin with extravagant truffles and an exotic blend of seasonings including cumin, Szechuan peppercorns and tamarind paste.

Mike Gray, chef of the Hanover Inn in Hanover, New Hampshire, has used a similar idea. As part of a recent menu he placed plain and fancy on the same plate in his unusual lamb duo. To stretch expensive grilled rack of lamb, he served two chops rather than four, filling out the entree with two pieces of cross-cut, braised lamb shank.

Inexpensive cuts are also effectively used in various ethnic and regional dishes that extend meat with beans, vegetables, salad greens or grains. Cassoulet, the hearty French dish made with white beans, pork loin, pork sausage, bacon and lamb shoulder, is one example. Lamb sate salad, too, uses meat sparingly, compared with a traditional entree of a chop or steak. For the restaurateur, less meat means more food-cost savings. For the customer, less meat translates into a lower fat intake.

And there is another plus on the nutritional side: Many low-cost cuts are not well marbled and their fat is often trimmable or, once cooked, skimmable. For example, a U.S. Department of Agriculture table tallies just 4.9 grams of fat for a 3½-ounce serving of eye of round, compared with 9.9 grams for an equivalent portion of tenderloin.

Perhaps the lower fat content explains why braised and stewed dishes are no longer viewed as "for cold weather only." When served with lighter seasonings and sauces, and with side dishes of fresh seasonal vegetables, these dishes remain popular straight through the summer months.

Creativity in the kitchen

Because inexpensive cuts lack the fat that guarantees tenderness and flavor in more costly meats, chefs must use seasonings and an array of cooking techniques to accomplish the same goals. Braising, stewing, poaching and grilling are four classic cooking techniques that, when matched with the right cut, work well for low-cost meats. (See sidebar on page 34.)

In addition, chefs are devising their own strategies for working with these challenging cuts. Some braise the

meat, then grill or stir-fry it briefly just before serving. Smoking a meat lends a special taste and tenderness to some cuts—especially pork. Some restaurants purchase the meat smoked, while others do the smoking in-house. The process of corning (in which meat is boned, trimmed, seasoned and cured) can offer a meat unique taste. Corning preserves meat as well as rendering it tender, and the technique can be used on pork shoulder as well as beef.

Unlike prime cuts that might go to the table with a sauce on the side or just a wedge of lemon, most inexpensive cuts would appear dried-out and unattractive without a sauce. Robust sauces that begin with a roux are most common, but chefs can elect to produce a lighter sauce with low-cost meats just as easily as with any other meat. The long-simmered stocks and juices that result from stewing, braising or poaching can be reduced to make a richly flavored sauce. Thickening agents could be the gelatin released by the meat bones, a thin slurry of flour and water, or a puree of cooked vegetables.

Stews and spicy seasoning

A top seller at Liberty Bar is Southern pot roast, made from a recipe of Fannie Mae Jackson, a longtime cook at the San Antonio restaurant. "We can't take it off the menu," says chef/owner Drew Allen. "Fannie has to make it every day."

Jackson cooks two four-pound roasts at a time, for a total of about 20 portions. The chosen cut is inside round, with the fat trimmed off. Garlic slivers are inserted in the meat, and it is then rolled in flour, salt and pepper, and browned in olive oil. Carrots, onions and potatoes cut into large pieces are placed around each roast; half a bottle of red wine and enough water to barely cover the roast are added, and the meat simmers slowly for about an hour and a half.

Using any cut of round or chuck, Liberty Bar also serves a carbonnade of beef. Guinness stout, an ale that the restaurant has on tap, is added to a roux of ham fat or olive oil. The stout tenderizes the meat just as wine would, but it also adds a rich brown color and distinctive flavor.

Carne guisada, a traditional Texas dish, consists of beef chunks—again, round or chuck—stewed in a mild green chile sauce, then served over Spanish rice.

Liberty Bar's Pinto Pig combines pork cubes from a lean cut such as shoulder with black beans, onion, serrano and poblano chiles, and a Mexican herb called epazote. Enough water is added to make the mixture soupy, and excess liquid is spooned off to cook rice. The beans and pork mixture is served over the rice and topped with a cooked sauce of tomatoes, onions and hot green chiles. A garnish of avocado and radish completes the dish.

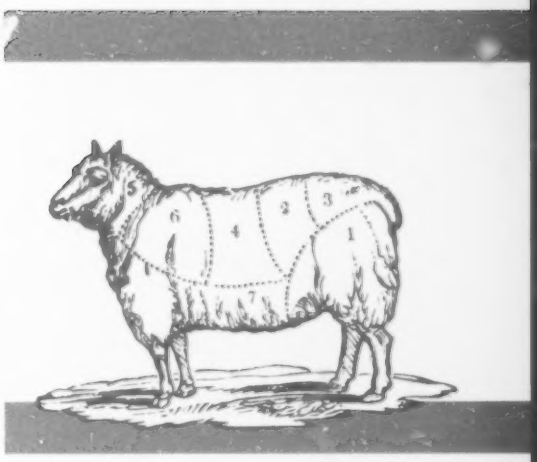
Allen sometimes butchers a veal quarter or half right in the kitchen. Once cuts such as steaks, shanks and roasts have been cut, the staff uses the round and leftover bits of meat for such dishes as a veal and *ancho* (a mild red chile pepper) stew. Bones are used for making stock.

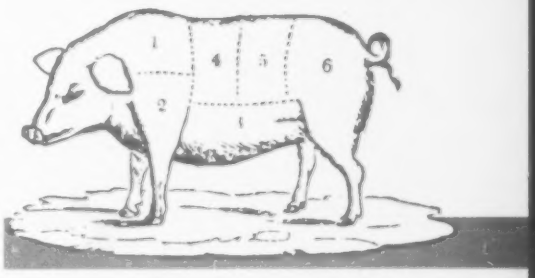
Modest menu mainstays

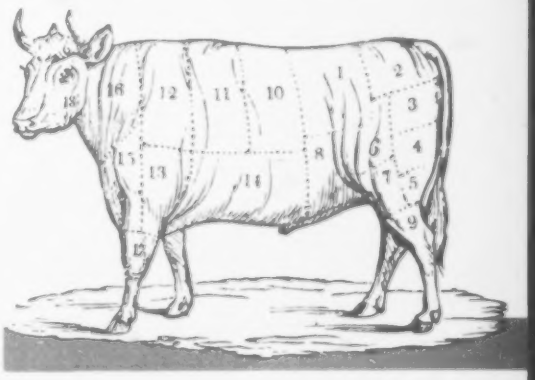
Pot roast is a menu mainstay at The Eccentric, a Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises restaurant in Chicago, but The Eccentric's version is quite different from that of Liberty Bar. The meat used is the tri-tip, a foodservice-only cut from the bottom sirloin butt. The meat is braised in red wine and stock until tender, and then it's sliced and grilled.

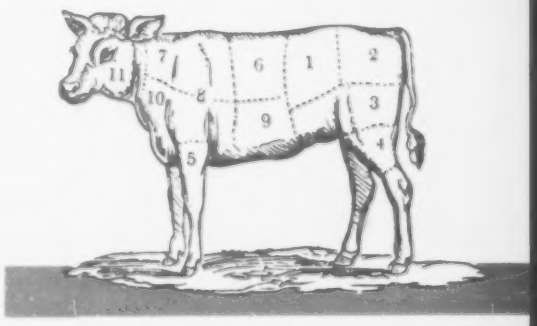
The extra step gives the dish a more elegant presentation and intensifies the flavor, according to Russell Bry, corporate chef and partner. Mashed potatoes whipped with horseradish, a signature dish of The Eccentric, are a natural accompaniment, along with carrots, onions, celery and pot roast gravy. The pot roast is served through the summer, with lighter sides of sauteed vegetables and a small salad.

The high cost of veal *scaloppine* makes the Roman dish *saltimbocca* a dish for deep pockets only. Bry applies the same idea to more modestly priced hickory-smoked pork loin chops, which are wrapped in prosciutto and sage leaves, then panfried. Accompaniments are red cab-









bage and mashed potatoes seasoned with garlic and fennel. Also on The Eccentric's menu is a grilled double-smoked pork chop with spinach greens and warm black-eyed pea salad.

Like Liberty Bar's Allen, Bry finds it economical to do some fabrication of veal and lamb in The Eccentric's own kitchen. From a leg of lamb, he gets three dishes. The main portion is tied off for a slow-roasted leg of lamb. The shank is braised and incorporated into a filling for spinach ravioli, and the inside round is sliced into lamb *scaloppine*.

Shortcuts to defatting

The extra work involved in trimming fat and connective tissue from inexpensive cuts could counteract any savings. But Cindy Pawlcyn, partner and executive chef of the restaurant company Real Restaurants in Sausalito, California, has found ways to cope with problematic cuts such as the breast of lamb or veal. The fat is easier to remove, she says, once the meat has been braised or poached and then chilled. If braised, the cleaned breast is cut into portions, coated with mustard and bread crumbs, and grilled. If poached, the meat is pulled off and used in a salad or stew.

Braised lamb shanks, covered with a cinnamon-seasoned tomato sauce and accompanied by couscous, are served at Bistro Roti, one of the company's restaurants. At another, Fog City Diner, oxtails braised in a rich veal stock with capers and sun-dried tomatoes are popular. Beef short ribs, braised in a mixture of stock and tangy barbecue sauce, are another specialty. Short ribs are also on the menu at the restaurant BIX. At BIX, vinegar is added to a red-wine braising liquid "to counteract the richness of the beef," according to Pawlcyn.

"Lamb hams" are made by curing pork shoulders; the method is similar to that used for prosciutto. The restaurant also smokes several cuts of pork, using oak, applewood or pear. At Mustards Grill in Napa Valley, pork shoulder is barbecued in a hot smoker until fork tender. "It makes a great sandwich," says Pawlcyn. Bacon, dosed liberally with pepper, is also smoked at Mustards Grill. At Bistro Roti, smoked ham hocks are shredded and combined with a tomato sauce to make a filling for buckwheat pancakes.

House-cured corned beef

The corned-beef hash served at Atlanta's Buckhead Diner is not the "mush" customers might expect, says Gerry Klaskala, chef and managing partner of the diner. First of all, the restaurant corns its own beef. Second, the meat and vegetables are cubed, not minced, so that the ingredients retain their separate identities.

Lamb leg steaks are easily prepared and sell well. Cut from the round end of the leg, the steaks are marinated in olive oil with fresh mint, rosemary, garlic and black pepper, then grilled. Braised lamb and veal shanks go over well, especially in cold weather. Sometimes the shanks are cut crosswise, as for *osso bucco*, and sometimes the shanks are cut lengthwise.

Klaskala used to have trouble with cheaper cuts of pork. "The problem is that customers won't eat it pink," says Klaskala. "So unless you use tenderloins, it requires a lot of timing to cook it past that point but not dry out the meat." Buying cured or smoked pork loins solved that problem for Klaskala. The processes leave the meats tender and well flavored, so that they need to be cooked only briefly. The chops are plated with polenta, fresh spinach and cranberry relish.

Far from disdaining cheap cuts as inferior, Buckhead Diner's kitchen staff enjoys the challenge of working with them. "The trend to these meats is like a breath of fresh air," says Klaskala. "It's more creative than working with goof-proof cuts that don't require a lot of skill." ❑

Toni Lydecker is a freelance writer in Irvington, New York.

Four classic ways to cook cheap cuts

Braising. This technique usually begins with slow, thorough browning of the meat along with chopped vegetables such as onion, carrots and celery. Once excess fat has been drained, liquid such as stock or water is added to partially cover the meat. Wine, prized for its tenderizing properties as well as distinctive flavor, is often part of the braising liquid. Herbs and other seasonings are added at this point, and the meat simmers slowly in a heavy covered pot until tender.

Tough but naturally flavorful cuts of beef, such as chuck roast, come into their glory when braised. The moist heat allows complex flavors to develop while dissolving gristle and softening tough tissue.

Stewing. The method is similar to braising, but the meat is submerged. Depending on the meat chosen and the seasonings, the result might be a Hungarian goulash encrusted with paprika and caraway, or a delicate veal ragout. If the meat is cut into cubes or other small pieces before cooking, care must be taken to trim away all external fat and sinew.

Poaching. The New England boiled dinner is a classic example of this technique, but the name is really a misnomer, for the meat and other ingredients must be simmered gently—not boiled—to become tender. The liquid might be water or flavored stock. In the French *pot-au-feu* and Italian *bollito misto*, beef, pork and other meats are added at different times to the liquid. A soup is made from the broth and served as the first course; the meats and vegetables are served as the second. Poached meats can also be sliced after cooking and bathed in a vinaigrette to become the centerpiece of a salad.

Grilling. Many inexpensive cuts can be grilled successfully if they spend some time in a marinade beforehand. In the case of lamb leg or riblets, which are naturally tender, the purpose is merely to add flavor. For most other inexpensive cuts, marinating is essential to tenderize the meat. To maximize surface area for the marinade's tenderizing action, tough cuts should be cut first into thin slices or cubes. The marinade can be wine-based, or it may be a mixture of oil, herbs and vinegar or lemon juice. A dry rub of herbs and spices will also help tenderize meat.

#115

Thanks, Professor

Dear Professor,

As parents of an HRI student who studied under your tutelage and who now is about to graduate, we want to express some things to you as we review the recent past.

When our son first walked into your classroom, he was both drawn to you and intimidated by you. You represent a pinnacle in your chosen field, and you inspired riveted attention and unshakable concentration with every word you uttered. Your words of wisdom were read time and time again in study sessions. To our student and his colleagues, you are on a pedestal not because you stepped there, but because they placed you there. At the same time, our son was at first reluctant to leap from the sea of anonymity that a large, crowded classroom affords, for fear of making a mistake, thereby being demeaned in your eyes and suffering the disassembly of a fragile ego. On occasion, he lost the name-list lottery by having you call on him—his first exposure to heart-stopping panic.

The first year he came home complaining bitterly that your only mission in life was to convince the class how brilliant you are and how stupid they were, as opposed to conveying the knowledge you possess to them in a manner that they could master. The second time he came home, he was sure you conspired to pile as much work on him as possible so he could not enjoy his vacation. You actually required him to do something for which he would be held accountable and against which his performance would be measured. The third time he came home, he was livid because your standards were such that you demanded proper grammar, correct spelling and excellent utilization of the English language in quantitatively grounded courses. He complained that in the qualitatively based courses you demanded clear and cogent exposition and presentation even though the material occasionally was technical and complex.

Now that he is about to graduate, he has remarked on the ease with which he can interface with you and the obvious mutual respect you have for one another. He gives you credit for maturing so well and so fast as a teacher in such a short span of time.

During his time with you, his mother and I have noticed his transformation from a shoulder-shrugging, frequently inattentive, usually inarticulate, self-centered teenager to a concerned, responsible and forward-looking young adult. You opened his mind and expanded it, challenging his world and discomforting his self-satisfaction. You pushed him, pulled him and stretched him to boundaries he did not know he possessed.

You set standards which at first he mocked, but which he now readily embraces as his own. Sometimes he didn't particularly warm to you as a person, and on other occasions he idolized you. When we pressed him on this, he did admit that often he came to class looking for entertainment rather than a mental challenge, but he is now able to distinguish substance from style, looking at people more carefully now than in the past when he was prone to make superficial, rash judgments.

With your exacting demands, your penchant for accuracy and perfection, your requirements to think analytically as well as holistically, creatively as well as communally, you conveyed values to him—as well as knowledge.

A short while ago we entrusted to you our most cherished possession, our son, so you could mold, shape, build and refine his intellectual development. You have done a magnificent job. While his mother and I are enormously proud of our young adult, we realize fully that much of what he is and what he will become as he takes his place in our industry and our society is attributable to you.

When I was teaching, it was the tradition at our school that at the end of the last class the students would give the professor a standing ovation if they had enjoyed the course, benefited from it and—most important—gained knowledge and insight from it. I don't know whether you have ever experienced that, but I do want you to know that my wife and I now rise in admiration and appreciation to applaud all that you have done for our son and his peers—past, present and future.

Thank you, Professor.

We say again, thank you, Professor.

Sincerely yours,

Two grateful parents

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Mexican restaurants heat up

Chiles and salsa are not the only things that are hot in Mexican restaurants. Customer counts are growing. In 1990, Mexican restaurant traffic rose more than 10 percent, driven mostly by quickservice Mexican places.

According to CREST,* Mexican restaurant traffic advanced more than 10 percent in 1990, versus a 2 percent advance for the industry as a whole. Traffic growth is hot, especially at quickservice restaurants. Quickservice Mexican restaurant traffic was up 13 percent in 1990, with the New England and Mid-Atlantic regions showing particularly sharp traffic gains, as Mexican restaurants become more common in those regions. This healthy 1990 gain came on top of a 14 percent advance in 1989.

Also posting traffic gains in 1990 were moderate-check upscale (considered casual dining) Mexican restaurants. In 1990, moderate-check upscale Mexican restaurant traffic increased 9 percent, and the New England, South Atlantic, and West South Central regions in particular posted large traffic gains. In 1989, customer counts posted healthy gains as well, as traffic advanced 8 percent—a similar traffic increase as for moderate-check upscale restaurants.

However, with the exception of the Mid-Atlantic region, midscale Mexican restaurant traffic did not fare as well in 1990, as customer counts declined slightly after posting gains the previous year. In 1989, midscale Mexican restaurant traffic increased 7 percent.

According to CREST, quickservice Mexican restaurants captured two-thirds (68 percent) of all Mexican restaurant traffic in 1990, up substantially from a 62 percent share in 1987. Between 1987 and 1990, midscale Mexican restaurants' share of total Mexican traffic dropped 5 percentage points to 13 percent, and moderate-check upscale Mexican restaurants' share dropped slightly to 19 percent.

Majority have tried Mexican food

According to the National Restaurant Association's *The Market for Ethnic Foods*, three-quarters (74 percent) of adults had tried Mexican food in the past, and 41 percent had eaten it in the past month, ranking Mexican food as the third most popular ethnic food, following Chinese and Italian (other than pizza). Moreover, when respondents were asked to choose their favorite out of a list of 19, one-quarter chose Mexican.

The survey also asked consumers to rate their favorite Mexican restaurant. The top four characteristics of consumers' favorite Mexican restaurants were (in order): friendly people and service, high standard of cleanliness, high quality of food and speed of service. In contrast, consumers emphasized size of portions and freshness of ingredients in their favorite Italian restaurants, and portion size and menu variety in Chinese restaurants.

High use of promotions

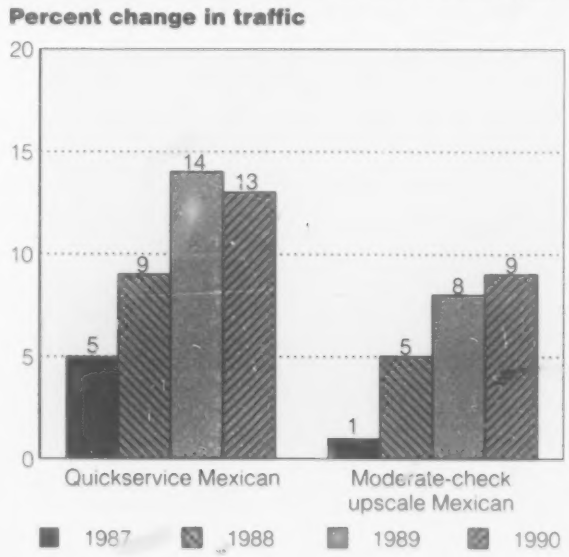
One explanation for the recent surge of quickservice Mexican restaurant traffic may be the accelerated use of promotions. In 1987, promotions were used on 16 percent of all quickservice Mexican restaurant eater occasions,** lower than the 19 percent for the quickservice industry. However, by 1989 a full one-quarter of quickservice Mexican restaurant eater occasions included a promotion, mainly in the form of restaurant specials. This compares with 21 percent for the quickservice industry as a whole.

Similarly, a higher proportion of eater occasions at moderate-check upscale Mexican restaurants involved the use of a promotion when compared with the overall moderate-check upscale segment. In 1989, 16 percent of moderate-check upscale Mexican-restaurant eater occasions included a promotion, compared with 13 percent for all moderate-check upscale eater occasions. On the other hand, midscale Mexican restaurant eater occasions involved a slightly lower rate of promotional usage. In 1989, 11 percent of midscale Mexican restaurant eater occasions included a promotion, compared with 14 percent for all midscale establishments.

Between 1987 and 1989, the average check size per person at quickservice Mex-

Mexican restaurant traffic pattern 1987 to 1990

Traffic growth at Mexican restaurants has increased steadily



Note: *Percent change is over prior year.*
Source: NPD/CREST Annual Household Reports

*CREST stands for Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, a diary survey of one of the NPD marketing and research companies.

Incidence of ordering Mexican food items at Mexican restaurants, 1989

Tacos were most popular at quickservice Mexican establishments

Food item	Percent of eater occasions on which item was ordered		
	Quickservice Mexican	Midscale Mexican	Moderate-check upscale Mexican
Tacos	55%	26%	20%
Burritos	32	19	14
Enchiladas	3	28	31
Other Mexican	24	55	59

Note: *Eater occasions may include more than one food item per order.*
Source: NPD/CREST Annual Household Report, 1989

Average check size at Mexican restaurants 1987 to 1989

Quickservice and moderate-check upscale Mexican establishments have posted minimal or no increases in check sizes

	1987	1988	1989
Quickservice Mexican	$2.62	$2.70	$2.59
Total Quickservice	2.56	2.69	2.80
Midscale Mexican	4.87	5.08	5.15
Total Midscale	4.28	4.43	4.59
Moderate-check upscale Mexican	7.10	7.27	7.31
Total Moderate-check upscale	7.38	7.42	7.72

Source: NPD/CREST Annual Household Reports

ican restaurants declined, giving these establishments an advantage among value-conscious consumers. In 1989, quickservice Mexican restaurants had an average check size per person of $2.59, a slight decrease from 1987. In contrast, between 1987 and 1989, the fast food industry witnessed a 9 percent increase in average check size, advancing to $2.80. At moderate-check upscale Mexican restaurants, the average per person check of $7.31 in 1989 compared favorably with the $7.72 average check for all moderate-check upscale establishments. Midscale Mexican establishments showed an average check size per person of $5.15 in 1989, higher than the $4.59 for total midscale.

***An eater occasion is one meal eaten by one person.*

Off-premises traffic share up slightly

In 1989, slightly more than half (53 percent) of all quickservice Mexican traffic was off-premises, up slightly from 51 percent in 1987. The proportion of off-premises traffic was lower in quickservice Mexican restaurants than in pizza restaurants (68 percent) or Asian restaurants (79 percent), but higher than for hamburger restaurants (51 percent). A smaller portion (14 percent) of midscale Mexican restaurant traffic was off-premises, and there was little off-premises traffic (2 percent) in moderate-check upscale Mexican places.

Contrary to what occurred in the quickservice sector as a whole, on-premises traffic at quickservice Mexican restaurants fared better than off-premises. In 1989, off-premises traffic increased 13 percent, while on-premises advanced 16 percent. Carryout orders were the driving force in the off-premises traffic gain, as these orders jumped more (18 percent) than drive-thru (10 percent).

Lunch popular

In 1989, more than half (53 percent) of quickservice Mexican restaurant traffic was for lunch, compared with 37 percent for the quickservice industry as a whole. Four in 10 (39 percent) eater occasions were for dinner, 6 percent were for evening snacks and 2 percent were for breakfast. Moreover, customer counts during lunch posted significant advances. In 1989, quickservice Mexican restaurant lunch traffic increased 23 percent. Breakfast traffic, although a very small share of total traffic (2 percent), increased 33 percent.

Dinner captured the majority of midscale Mexican restaurant traffic (56 percent) in 1989, and lunch represented 36 percent of traffic. Two-thirds (66 percent) of moderate-check upscale Mexican restaurant traffic was for dinner and one-third (30 percent) for lunch.

The National Restaurant Association's menu analysis,*** which examined changes in menu items over five years (from 1985 to 1990), reveals that the number of Mexican entrees offered in tableservice restaurants has grown. In 1990, the number of Mexican entrees offered on menus was up 36 percent from 1985. However, the representation of Mexican entrees in the overall entree mix remained the same (7 percent). Of particular note was the increase in the number of taco salads and enchiladas offered on menus.

Profile of a Mexican-food eater

According to *The Market for Ethnic Foods*, those most likely to have tried Mexican foods were living in households with incomes of more than $25,000, and residents of metropolitan areas with populations of less than 250,000. Additionally, a special 1988 National Restaurant Association/CREST study revealed that eater occasions during which Mexican food is ordered are slightly more likely to involve females (53 percent) and those be-

****This information was taken from an analysis of randomly selected menus submitted to the National Restaurant Association's Great Menu Contest. Fifty menus were from 1985 and 50 from 1990.*

tween 18 and 44 years of age. In 1988, six in 10 eater occasions (59 percent) involving Mexican food were by 18 to 44-year-olds.

Increase in number of franchised Mexican restaurants

According to the International Franchise Association's *Franchising In the Economy 1988-1990*, the number of franchised Mexican restaurants was estimated to total 4,926 in 1990, up from 4,407 in 1988. Mexican franchised restaurants represented about 5 percent of all franchised restaurants, unchanged from 1988 to 1990. Also, between 1988 and 1990, it was estimated that sales at Mexican franchised restaurants increased 14 percent, reaching $3.4 billion in 1990.

How to order *The Market for Ethnic Foods*

A copy of *The Market for Ethnic Foods* (CS969) is available to association members for $27.50 and to nonmembers for $55 including shipping and handling charges (overseas orders require a 20 percent surcharge). All orders must be prepaid.

You may order the report by sending a check or money order to the association's publications department, 1200 17th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036-3097. For credit-card orders, call the association's information services and library between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Eastern Time) at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960 in Washington DC.

Black-owned eating and drinking-place firms: 1987

This article examines the state of black-owned eating and drinking-place firms. Although they represent a relatively small proportion of total eating and drinking-place firms, their sales nearly doubled between 1982 and 1987.

The number of business firms owned by blacks increased 38 percent from 308,260 in 1982 to 424,165 in 1987, and sales from these firms more than doubled to $19.8 billion over the same period. Eating and drinking-place firms made up 3 percent of all black-owned enterprises. The number of black-owned eating and drinking-place firms advanced 3.8 percent between 1982 and 1987 (from 11,406 to 11,834), while their sales nearly doubled from $619.1 million in 1982 to $1.1 billion in 1987.

Eating and drinking-place firms accounted for more than 5 percent of all sales from black-owned firms, making them the sixth-largest business in terms of sales among all types of black-owned firms in 1987.

Census data indicate that nearly 4 percent of all eating and drinking-place firms were under black ownership in 1987.

Not just mom and pops

A substantial proportion of eating and drinking-place firms under black ownership appear to be "mom and pop" establishments where there are no paid employees. Of the 11,834 black-owned eating and drinking-place firms in 1987, 60 percent had no paid employees. This proportion is down from 1982, when 70 percent of black-owned eating and drinking-place firms reported having no paid employees.

The number of black-owned eating and drinking-place firms with paid employees increased dramatically, advancing 41 percent from 3,365 firms in 1982 to 4,747 in 1987. At the same time, the number of black-owned eating and drinking-place firms without paid employees dropped 12 percent from 8,041 in 1982 to 7,087 in 1987. The number of eating and drinking-place firms with paid employees ranked fifth among all black-owned businesses in the number of firms that had paid employees.

A large employer

Aside from being one of the largest businesses in the number of firms with paid employees, eating and drinking-place firms were also one of the largest employers among all black-owned firms in terms of number of paid employees. The number of paid employees at eating and drinking-place firms under black ownership nearly doubled from 1982 to 1987, rising 95 percent from 16,562 to 32,343. This increase made eating and drinking-place firms the second largest black-owned business type (behind business-service firms) in terms of paid employees, as they accounted for 15 percent of paid employees of black-owned firms in 1987.

On the average, black-owned eating and drinking-place firms had 6.8 paid employees in 1987, up from 4.9 paid employees in 1982. Black-owned eating and drinking-place firms were smaller in terms of employ-

Growth in black-owned eating and drinking-place firms, 1982 to 1987

Sales and paid employees grew substantially for black-owned eating and drinking-place firms between 1982 and 1987

Measure	1982	1987	Percent change
Number of firms			
Total	11,406	11,834	3.8%
With paid employees	3,365	4,747	41.1
Sales*			
Total (in thousands)	$437,183	$918,321	110.1
Per firm	$129,921	$193,453	48.9
Per paid employee	$ 26,397	$ 28,393	7.6
Paid employees	16,562	32,343	95.3
Employees per firm	4.9	6.8	38.8

*includes only firms with paid employees

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1987 Survey of Minority-Owned Business Enterprises: Black*

Operating ratios for black and nonblack-owned eating and drinking-place firms, 1987*

Black-owned eating and drinking-place firms posted higher sales per employee than did nonblack-owned eating and drinking-place firms

Ratio	Black-owned	Nonblack-owned
Sales per firm	$193,453	$289,152
Sales per employee	$28,393	$26,189
Employees per firm	6.8	11.0

*includes only firms with paid employees

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1987 Survey of Minority-Owned Business Enterprises: Black*

ees per firm than those owned by nonblacks, which had an average of 11.0 employees per firm. Although they had smaller staffs, eating and drinking-place firms with black owners had higher sales per employee than did those with nonblack owners—$28,393 compared with $26,189.

Eating and drinking-place firms with paid employees accounted for 85 percent of sales for all black-owned eating and drinking-place firms in 1987, up from 71 percent of sales in 1982. By comparison, 94 percent of total nonblack-owned eating and drinking-place firm sales came from establishments with paid employees in 1987.

Total receipts for black-owned eating and drinking-place firms more than doubled from $437 million in 1982 to $918 million in 1987. By comparison, receipts at black-owned eating and drinking-place firms without paid employees declined from $182 million in 1982 to $166 million in 1987.

Moreover, sales per firm were more than eight times higher for eating and drinking-place firms with paid employees than for those without—$193,453 compared with $23,444. Per firm sales also grew more substantially between 1982 and 1987 at black-owned eating and drinking-place firms with paid employees than at those without—49 percent compared with 4 percent.

Payroll advanced with employment

Along with the increase in the number of employees in black-owned eating and drinking-place firms has come a large increase in payroll for those employees. Payroll among black-owned eating and drinking-place firms more than doubled from $81.4 million in 1982 to $204.7 million in 1987. Payroll per employee advanced 29 percent from 1982 to 1987, and payroll per firm grew 78 percent. As a percent of sales, payroll jumped from 18.6 percent in 1982 to 22.3 percent of sales in 1987.

Payroll per employee among black-owned eating and drinking-place firms was equal to that for those owned by nonblacks in 1987, but payroll per firm was substantially lower. This is probably because of black-owned firms having fewer employees per firm than nonblack-owned firms, thereby resulting in lower payroll costs. Payroll as a percent of sales was also somewhat higher for eating and drinking-place firms owned by nonblacks at 24.2 percent.

—Nancy Michalski

1990 annual CREST report

Customer traffic counts advanced a healthy 1.7 percent in 1990—the highest industry growth recorded since 1987. This compares with a growth of 1.4 percent in 1989 and a slight 0.5 percent rise in customer counts in 1988.

Traffic highlights

Two out of the three industry segments recorded traffic increases in 1990. Quickservice restaurants led the way with a 2.4 percent growth in customer traffic. This is double the 1.2 percent traffic growth recorded for quickservice establishments in 1989. Double-digit traffic increases were recorded for Asian (up 15.4 percent), Mexican (up 13.3 percent) and barbecue (up 11.7 percent) restaurants in the quickservice segment. Food stores (up 7.9 percent), other sandwich (up 6.8 percent) and chicken (up 5.4 percent) establishments also recorded impressive gains in customer counts for the year. Hamburger restaurants, the largest category in the quickservice segment in terms of customer counts, saw traffic decline 1.0 percent for the year.

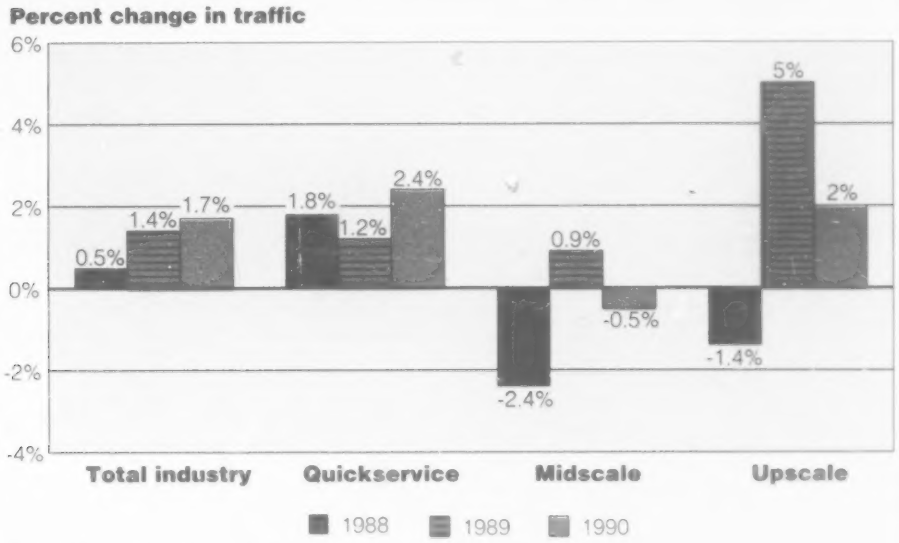
Upscale restaurants also showed traffic growth, posting a 2.0 percent rise in customer counts in 1990. Moderate-check upscale restaurants drove the increase, as traffic increased 4.7 percent. Moderate-check barbecue, Italian, steak and hamburger restaurants all recorded double-digit increases in customer counts. Varied-menu concepts were the only moderate-check upscale establishments to record a traffic decline in 1990. Higher-check upscale restaurants posted a 6.4 percent loss in customer traffic for the year. Declines in traffic among higher-check upscale restaurants in the Italian (down 12.0 percent), steak (down 12.0 percent), varied-menu (down 9.7 percent) and hotels (down 5.9 percent) categories contributed to the decline in customer counts for the higher-check upscale category.

Midscale restaurants were the only group to register a customer loss for 1990, as traffic declined a modest 0.5 percent. This represents the second drop in customer traffic in three years. Healthy traffic advances among family-style (up 10.0 percent), fish/seafood (up 5.5 percent) and Asian (up 5.3 percent) concepts almost offset traffic declines among barbecue (down 12.2 percent), hotels (down 7.8 percent) and sandwich (down 5.5 percent) restaurants.

All three meal periods registered traffic advances for 1990. Supper led the way with a 2.8 percent rise in customer counts for the year, followed by breakfast and lunch, which recorded advances of 2.4 percent and 1.3 percent, respectively. Supper-time traffic growth of 3.7 percent at quickservice restaurants and 2.9 percent at upscale restaurants offset a modest 0.2 percent decline in supper customer counts at midscale restaurants. Upscale restaurants posted the largest increase in lunch traffic (up 2.7 percent), while quickservice restaurants posted a more modest 1.6 percent rise in lunch

Percent change in customer traffic by segment* (1988 to 1990)

Industry traffic growth hit a three-year high in 1990



*percent change over previous year

Source: *NPD/CREST Annual Household Report*

traffic. Lunch traffic at midscale restaurants was flat for the year.

Quickservice restaurants single-handedly drove breakfast* traffic increases, as counts increased 3.5 percent, offsetting declines in breakfast traffic at both midscale (down 0.2 percent) and upscale (down 6.1 percent) establishments.

On-premises traffic advanced a modest 0.3 percent in 1990. This follows a 0.2 percent rise in 1989 and a 0.6 percent decline in 1988. On-premises traffic grew the most at upscale restaurants, where counts advanced 1.9 percent for the year. On-premises traffic inched up 0.1 percent at midscale restaurants and was flat at quickservice restaurants. Both lunch (up 1.1 percent) and supper (up 0.2 percent) showed on-premises traffic growth for the year, while on-premises customer counts fell slightly (down 0.3 percent) at breakfast.

While on-premises traffic grew at a snail's pace for the second consecutive year, off-premises traffic continued to advance by larger margins. Total off-premises traffic advanced 3.4 percent in 1990, compared with 3.0 percent in 1989 and 1.9 percent in 1988. Advances in off-premises traffic at upscale (up 5.0 percent) and quickservice (up 4.0 percent) establishments offset weakness in midscale off-premises traffic, where counts were down 4.0 percent for the year. Breakfast recorded the largest increase in off-premises counts among the three meal periods—up 7.8 percent. Supper and lunch off-premises traffic grew by more modest amounts—up 5.6 percent and 1.7 percent, respectively.

Average check size

The average check per eater rose 2.3 percent in 1990 to $3.88. This is the smallest advance in average check size since 1987 and follows increases of 3.6 percent in 1988 and 4.1 percent in 1989. Midscale restaurants posted the largest increase in the average eater tab—up 3.1 percent to $4.73 per person. The average check size at quickservice restaurants rose 2.9 percent in 1990 to $2.88 per person. Upscale restaurants recorded the smallest increase in average check size in 1990—up 0.8 percent to $9.54 per person.

Breakfast recorded the largest increase in average check size of the three meal periods for the second consecutive year. The average eater check at breakfast rose 2.8 percent to $2.62 per person. The average lunch tab rose by a more modest 2.5 percent to $3.63 per person, and supper checks rose 1.7 percent to $5.04 per person.

Promotions

Promotion usage continued to grow in 1990. Promotions were used on 20.8 percent of all occasions in 1990, up from 18.4 percent of occasions in 1989. Quickservice restaurants led the three segments in terms of promotion usage, as deals were a part of 23.3 percent of all quickservice occasions in 1990, up from 20.9 percent in 1989. Promotion usage also continued to grow at both midscale and upscale establishments. Promotions were used on 16.2 percent of all midscale dining occasions and 14.8 percent of upscale occasions in 1990, up from 13.6 percent and 13.0 percent of occasions, respectively, in 1989.

Supper was the meal for which deal usage was most common in 1990. Deals were used on 27.3 percent of all supper occasions in 1990, up from 23.8 percent of occasions in 1989. Lunch deal usage rose to 19.1 percent of occasions in 1990, up from 17.0 percent of occasions in 1989. Deal usage also increased at breakfast, up to 16.9 percent of occasions in 1990 from 14.7 percent of occasions in 1989.

—*Nancy Michalski*

*Segment breakfast traffic also includes a.m. snack traffic

Recession and foodservice

Higher unemployment, low consumer confidence and depressed levels of economic activity are just a few of the indications that the nation's economic expansion has ended.

In the current climate of economic uncertainty, a National Restaurant Association survey indicates that tableservice operators consider maintaining their volume of business a top problem in 1991. Moreover, most tableservice operators do not expect lending conditions to ease this year.

After eight years of uninterrupted economic growth, the nation's economy slipped into recession sometime during the summer of 1990, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER). NBER, an independent nonprofit organization that is regarded as the standard determiner of recessionary periods, has indicated that it will soon pinpoint a month between June and September of 1990 as the onset of the nation's latest recessionary period. The NBER action will only confirm what a host of economic indicators, business analysts and association research have shown to be a period of depressed economic activity. So how does the foodservice industry perform in recessionary times? To answer this question, it may be helpful to review some statistics on the performance of the economy and the foodservice industry in prior recessions.

A historical perspective

According to NBER, the national economy has undergone four recessionary cycles since 1970, excluding the current economic slowdown (see table). The duration of these four prior recessions ranged from six to 16 months. A recession is generally defined as two or more consecutive quarters of decline in real gross national product (GNP).

A review of key economic indicators since 1971 reveals that real annual GNP declined in 1974, 1975, 1980 and 1982. These years coincide with recessionary periods. Since the growth of real disposable income on a per capita basis is generally regarded as an important factor in foodservice sales, a historical look at this key economic indicator is also helpful. Real per capita disposable income posted declines in 1974, 1980 and 1982. As with GNP, these annual declines coincided with recessionary periods.

National Restaurant Association data show that annual foodservice sales since 1971 have posted real declines only two times—in 1974 and in 1980. These two declines coincided with recessionary periods. However, in the 1982 recessionary period the foodservice industry continued to show modest positive real growth.

The recent environment

Until the summer of 1990, the U.S. economy was enjoying the longest peacetime expansion in its history. However, consumer concern over the economy, fueled by the Persian Gulf crisis, exacerbated an already softening economy in 1990.

Consumer confidence, as measured by the Conference Board's Consumer Confidence Index, plunged in August and October 1990 and remained at historically low levels as 1991 began. The confidence index for January 1991 fell to a level only slightly above that recorded at the bottom of the 1980 recession.

Real disposable personal income on an annual basis peaked in July 1990 and declined through November 1990. Real GNP growth on an annual basis dropped 2.1 percent in the fourth quarter of 1990 based on early estimates—down from a 1.7 percent advance for the first quarter of 1990.

The civilian unemployment rate, which hovered around 5.3 percent during the first half of 1990, slowly rose over the second half of the year and exceeded 6 percent at year's end. By January 1991, unemployment stood at 6.2 percent, almost a full percentage point above a year earlier.

Credit standards tighten

More than two out of five tableservice operators expect their financing to be more difficult in 1991

Percent of operators expecting financing to be	Annual sales volume: Less than $500,000	$500,000 to $999,999	$1 million or more
Harder	41%	46%	43%
Same	22	21	22
Easier	10	8	9
Don't know	27	24	26

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Tableservice Trends: 1991*

Recessionary periods 1970 to present

Prior recessions have ranged from six to sixteen months in duration

Beginning	End	Duration
December 1969	November 1970	11 months
November 1973	March 1975	16 months
January 1980	July 1980	6 months
July 1981	November 1982	16 months
June–September 1990*	NA**	NA**

**In spring 1991, NBER, an independent nonprofit organization that is regarded as the standard determiner of recessionary periods, will pinpoint the exact beginning month.*

***NA = Not Available*

Source: National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), National Restaurant Association

Most important problems that tableservice operators report they face this year, by check size

Labor and maintaining volume of business top the list among operators

Dinner check size per person	Top four problems in 1991	Percent of operators reporting
Less than $8	1. Labor/finding qualified labor	38%
	2. Increased costs	18
	3. Increasing wages	14
	4. Maintaining volume of business	10
$8 to $14.99	1. Labor/finding qualified labor	32
	2. Maintaining volume of business	28
	3. Increased costs	21
	4. Inflation/recession/economy	16
$15 to $24.99	1. Labor/finding qualified labor	34
	2. Maintaining volume of business	28
	3. Inflation/recession/economy	18
	4. Increased costs	16
$25 or more	1. Maintaining volume of business	31
	2. Labor/finding qualified labor	25
	3. Inflation/recession/economy	19
	4. Increased costs	15

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Tableservice Trends, 1991*

and was at its highest level in more than three years. In addition, many local economies continued to operate at or near recessionary levels.

The American Financial Services Association reported that personal bankruptcies through the third quarter of 1990 continued their persistent rise. The Dun and Bradstreet Corporation indicated that business failures increased almost 15 percent in the first nine months of 1990 compared with the same period in 1989. In addition, Dun and Bradstreet noted that the 1990 increase in business failures came after three consecutive years of steady decreases.

With unemployment rising, real-income growth slowing and consumer confidence low, consumers reined in their large durable purchases for items such as automobiles during the second half of 1990. According to the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association, monthly unit sales of passenger cars and light trucks peaked in May 1990 and plummeted more than 37 percent by January 1991. It is important to note that as consumers decrease their large durable purchases, foodservice expenditures may actually be aided because there are fewer fixed charges against household income to limit the amount of cash on hand. Since foodservice is primarily a cash business, lower levels of durable purchasing can act to bolster consumers' foodservice expenditures, especially in a tougher economic environment. In addition, convenience-driven consumers continue to regard food prepared away from home as a necessity.

Consequently, the National Restaurant Association forecasts that in 1991 real foodservice sales should still advance a modest 0.6 percent to reach $248.1 billion. (See the December 1990 ***Restaurants USA*** for complete details of the association's 1991 foodservice industry forecast.) The 1991 figure is a slight improvement over 1990's projected 0.3 percent real increase in sales. In comparison, the foodservice industry frequently achieved real gains of 3 to 5 percent in the 1970s and early 1980s when the industry was less mature and in a higher-growth economic environment.

When consumers were asked in 1990 which two or three things they usually cut back on first when they need to curtail spending, a Roper Organization survey revealed that dinners at restaurants and entertainment outside the home were the first to go. Moreover, well-educated and affluent adults were more likely than average to cut back on their restaurant usage.

An indication of how the industry is faring comes from the association's monthly Foodservice Market Measure. The proportion of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day averaged 46 to 47 percent in November and December 1990, a significant decline from 51 percent in the first six months of 1990. After holding up fairly well in September and October, the proportion of adults who were on-premises patrons on a typical day in November and December dipped to the 32 to 33 percent level, a significant decline from the 37 percent average through the first half of 1990. (See Market Measure, page 44.)

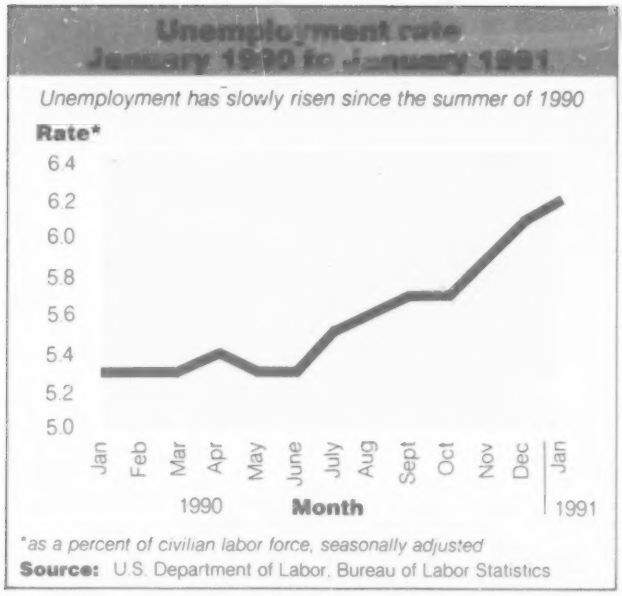
The operator perspective

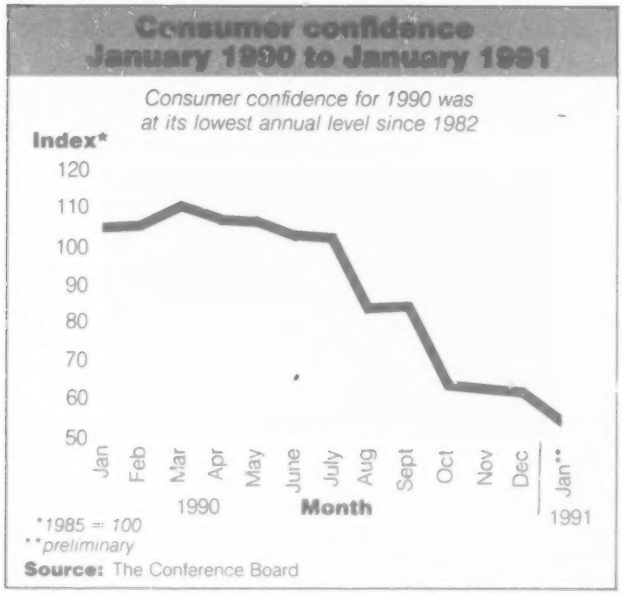
A National Restaurant Association survey conducted in fall 1990 provides some insights on tableservice operator concerns regarding current business conditions. Operators were asked what was likely to be the most important problem their business faces in 1991.

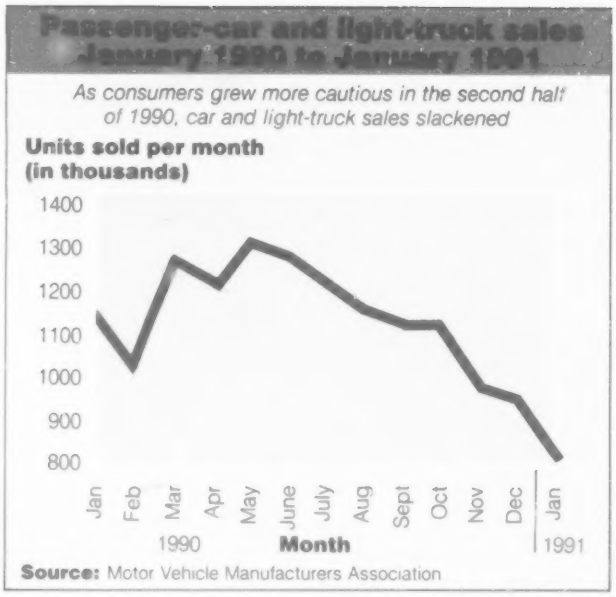
Approximately one-third of the tableservice operators cited labor and finding qualified labor as the most pressing issue this year. This problem is ranked first or second for each of the per person dinner-check categories from less than $8 to $25 or more.

However, maintaining volume of business is of significantly more concern to restaurateurs in the $8-or-more check category than it is to those with per person dinner checks averaging less than $8. In addition, the current state of the economy is viewed as a problem by a greater proportion of those with per person dinner checks of $8 or more.

A comparison of 1990 survey results with those of a similar survey conducted in 1988 reveal how operator concerns have changed in







just two years. Inflation/recession/economy, mentioned in 1990 by 10 to 20 percent of respondents, was not cited by enough respondents in 1988 to be individually tabulated. Furthermore, the proportion of respondents concerned about sales and costs increased while those concerned about labor decreased.

Despite the fact that labor/finding qualified labor is the first or second concern mentioned by respondents, the proportion mentioning this problem has declined dramatically since 1988. As economic conditions have deteriorated in various parts of the country, demand for labor has slackened, which makes it easier to find employees. Nevertheless, nearly twice as many respondents are concerned about increased costs, despite the fact that the overall annual inflation rate has risen by slightly more than one percentage point since 1988. It is likely that increases in the federal minimum wage, coupled with rapidly rising oil prices at the time the interviews were conducted, had an impact on this response.

Tighter business credit

The association's 1990 tableservice operator survey confirms what the Federal Reserve Board has noted since the second half of 1990: Banks have tightened their credit standards. Consequently, most businesses, including restaurants, now find it more difficult to borrow money.

More than 40 percent of tableservice operators predict it will be more difficult to obtain financing in 1991. Just one out of 10 expected lending conditions to ease this year. Tighter business-credit conditions were anticipated this year by both large and small tableservice operators. For example, 41 percent of respondents with annual sales less than $500,000 expected it to be harder to obtain required financing, as did a virtually equal 43 percent of operators with annual sales of $1 million or more.

—*Hudson Riehle*

How to order

In addition to information on how tableservice operators perceive business conditions and the financing environment, *Tableservice Trends: 1991* explores a variety of topics pertinent to tableservice restaurants including customer satisfaction with service, casual dining and nutritional concerns. The report also includes the results of a Gallup consumer survey on the needs of tableservice customers and how various types of restaurants are responding, as well as a menu analysis investigating how menu offerings have changed over the past five years.

Tableservice Trends: 1991 costs $35 for members and $70 for nonmembers. To order, contact the association's information services department by calling (202) 331-5960 or (800) 424-5156.

Foodservice Market Measure—December 1990

After trending downward from September through November, the proportion of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day in December 1990 leveled off at 47 percent. Compared with the first half of 1990, when slightly more than half of all adults were foodservice patrons on a typical day, it seems clear that worsening economic conditions are having an impact on the incidence of industry patronage.

Lunch is the meal period where the decline in patronage is most evident. Although 30 percent of adults were foodservice patrons for lunch on a typical day in the first half of 1990, the proportion slipped to 24 percent in November and December.

A look at the demographics suggests that both men and women were less inclined to be lunch patrons in November and December than they were during the first half of 1990; the proportion who were lunch patrons was off five percentage points for each month.

A somewhat different picture emerges when lunch patronage by age is examined. Significant decreases in patronage have occurred among young adults 18 to 24 years old and among baby boomers, most of whom are between 25 and 44 years of age. In contrast, little change has occurred in the proportion of adults 45 years of age and older who are lunch patrons, despite deteriorating economic conditions.

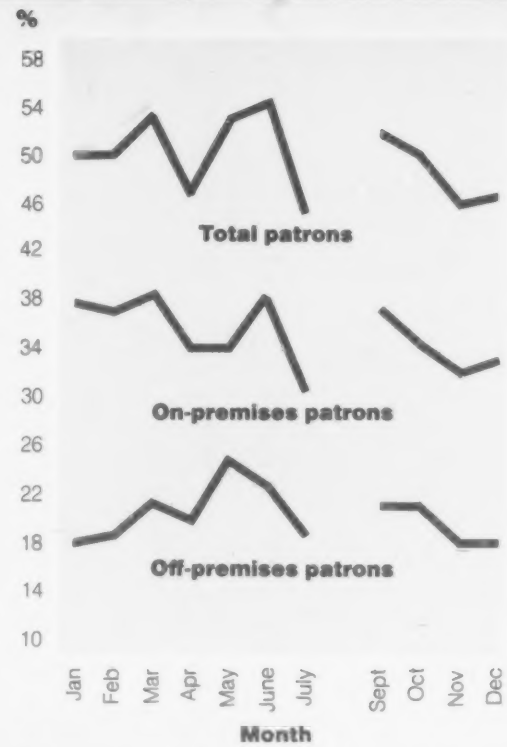
On-premises versus off-premises

After declining in November, the proportion of adults who were on-premises patrons changed little in December. On-premises patronage averaged 32 to 33 percent in November and December, off from 37 percent in the first six months of the year.

Off-premises patronage averaged 18 percent on a typical December day—no change from November, but off from earlier in the year.

—Susan Mills

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons in 1990



Note: *Because of a Gallup error, there is no data for August 1990.*
Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were lunch patrons on a typical day

	January to June 1990	November to December 1990
Males	33%	27%
Females	26	21
18 to 24-year-olds	40	32
25 to 34-year olds	35	28
35 to 44-year-olds	30	23
45 to 54-year-olds	28	32
55 to 64-year-olds	24	22
65-year-olds or older	19	15
All adults	30	24

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Foodservice Market Measure

The Foodservice Market Measure is based on 1,000 telephone interviews, conducted by the Gallup Organization each month, with a nationally representative sample of adults age 18 and older. Each person is asked the same questions:

1. Which of the following did you do yesterday?

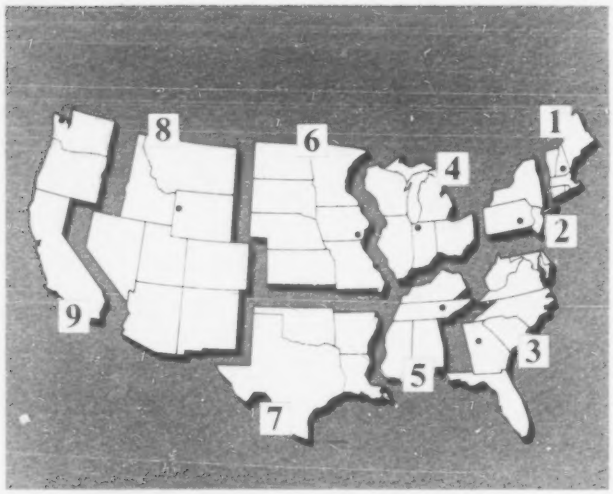
☐ Ate on the premises of a restaurant, fast food place, cafeteria or any other place where you purchased a meal or snack.

☐ Purchased takeout food "to go" or had it delivered.

2. Was the food you ate on premises yesterday for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

3. Was the takeout food you purchased or had delivered for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

The monthly tracking of purchases is supplemented by quarterly inquiries on topics of industry interest.



1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: Concord, NH
Association member: Robert Arnold
Operation: The Red Blazer Restaurant and Pub
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 6 years
Seats: 200
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Business has been soft this year at the Red Blazer, according to owner **Robert Arnold.** "We're probably down 10 to 15 percent from last year. The economy has hurt us, but we're also finding our beverage sales are down. People today skip the drinks to keep their check averages down," he says.

The Red Blazer is divided into two dining options—one side features prime rib, seafood and high-ticket menu items, the pub side offers patrons sandwiches, finger foods, appetizers and small dinners. "I've noticed that more and more people are going to the pub side and splitting a plate of nachos instead of ordering a prime-rib dinner," says Arnold. To entice diners to the restaurant side, Arnold has added a heart-healthy section to the menu.

Brunch business has increased by 40 to 50 percent since Arnold worked out trades with local TV and radio stations. "The advertising really helped draw in the people," says Arnold. Diners also enjoy early-bird specials seven days a week for $8.95.

2 MID-ATLANTIC

Location: Harrisburg, PA
Association member: Anthony Salomoney
Operation: Hope Station Restaurant
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 5 years
Seats: 100
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Business is 10 to 15 percent off of last year's monthly gross—but at least it's stable," says **Anthony Salomoney,** owner of Hope Station Restaurant. Salomoney is keeping an even sharper eye on food cost, the payroll and operational expenses. He has also put off making major purchases for the time being. So far, he hasn't had to cut labor. "I've tried to spread out the burden of cutting back hours while keeping everybody working," says Salomoney.

Salomoney is also reducing radio and print advertising and using more direct advertising via in-house promotional material and a mailing list. "Right now, I am most interested in keeping regular customers coming back to us. A mailing list will allow me to be more targeted in my advertising," he says.

The building that houses the restaurant is more than 100 years old and was originally the Hope Station #2 firehouse.

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Conyers, GA
Association member: Dan Hunsicker
Operation: Mamie's Kitchen Biscuits
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 10 years
Seats: 40
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch

Until the weather warms up, business will remain slow at Mamie's Kitchen Biscuits, says manager **J.W. Pierce.** "It's just that time of year when people don't eat out much. But business will pick up in the summer," he says.

Pierce says the owners advertise occasionally in the local newspaper with coupon offers that usually result in a good return rate. "We don't need to advertise much, because we've been here 10 years and we're well established. We're like the neighborhood hangout," he says.

Mamie's is located in the middle of the business district and attracts professionals hungry for country-style breakfasts and dinners—and, of course, for the restaurant's homemade biscuits.

4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Valparaiso, IN
Association members: Chuck, Caroline and Russ Adams
Operation: Strongbow Inn
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 51 years
Seats: 400 including banquet facilities
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

The owners of the Strongbow Inn have noticed a strange phenomenon in their restaurant each time there is a recession or threat of one: their business goes up. "Our business has been great. Last year was our largest year ever," says Strongbow Inn co-owner **Russ Adams.** Adams operates the restaurant with his mother and father, **Caroline** and **Chuck Adams,** who bought the inn from his grandmother in 1968.

Turkeys could be seen dotting the land around the inn up until 1980. Now the Adams buy their turkey meat from two suppliers. "Our mainstay is turkey. We serve a complete turkey dinner, turkey Oscar, turkey dijon, turkey pies—we went through 130,000 pounds of birds last year," says Russ Adams. As business has grown over the years, so have the kitchen and dining rooms, which have taken over the small cabins in which patrons could spend the night back in the 1940s.

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Cookeville, TN
Association members: Brenda and Mike Migliore
Operation: Bobby Q's
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 8 years
Seats: 85
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Atmosphere can make or break a restaurant, accord-

ing to **Brenda Migliore,** who co-owns Bobby Q's with her husband **Mike.** "We try to have a happy atmosphere—pleasant and laid back," she says. "People often comment on how happy our servers seem. They enjoy their jobs, and we make it a jolly place. If customers get the feeling that serving them is a pleasure, then they will want to eat in your place again."

Migliore draws her waitstaff from a pool of college students in her community. Each potential server begins by acting as a server's helper until he or she knows the job well. "We always train people before putting them out on the floor—you never just throw somebody out there. In order to give good service, your servers have to know their jobs," says Migliore.

Bobby Q's specializes in barbecue items and catfish and attracts a large chunk of the business crowd. "We get a lot of repeats because of the good service and the good food," she says.

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Mount Pleasant, IA
Association member: David Heaton
Operation: Iris Restaurant
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 23 years
Seats: 250
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Everything was great, just great, until Thanksgiving," says **David Heaton,** owner of the Iris Restaurant. Then things "took a pause," he says. "Since the Middle East crisis and with the uncertain economy, the customer is insecure about his future," says Heaton.

Heaton has raised menu prices because of higher food costs and has had to trim employee hours with another jump in the minimum wage coming. "Here the tip-credit regulations are still the old way; I may have to trim some more hours off," he says.

The restaurant offers diners a diverse American menu with salmon, steak, prime rib and chicken items. As his customers grow warier, Heaton says he is making his advertising dollars go further by targeting his ads and using specifics about his food. "People get lazy sometimes with their ads and just put a general ad with their hours of operation and number in the dining section. That's money down the tubes these days. You've got to make your ads have punch, make them focused on your market," he advises.

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: New Orleans, LA
Association member: Wayne Pierce
Operation: Bon Ton Cafe
Profile: Mid to upscale restaurant
In business: 40 years
Seats: 114
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

At the Bon Ton Cafe, menu items are prepared in the old Cajun style of cooking, not the hot and spicy version that has gotten so much attention in recent years, says owner **Wayne Pierce.**

The restaurant, located on Magazine Street, draws its share of tourists, but local businesspeople also fill up the tables. The restaurant's friendly atmosphere helps attract diners, as do dishes such as Red Fish Bon Ton, Oysters Alvin and smothered eggplant with shrimp and crabmeat.

Renewed tourist interest in New Orleans has increased business recently, says Pierce, and he has not had to advertise yet to increase traffic.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Teton Village, WY
Association member: T.P. Mahin
Operation: Mangy Moose Saloon
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 22 years
Seats: 200
Meal served: Dinner

The Mangy Moose Saloon's location, close to Grand Teton National Park, Yellowstone National Park and the Jackson Hole ski area, garners a lot of tourists for the restaurant. "Summertime is the busiest time, but we get a lot of people in the winter when they come here to ski," says **Steve King,** general manager of the restaurant.

Locals also enjoy coming to the Mangy Moose, but they tend to steer clear of the restaurant when it is packed with tourists, says King.

Competition for the tourist trade is always tough among the area's eating establishments, says King, and the Mangy Moose tries to lure diners in by giving them ample food for their money and by providing excellent service.

9 PACIFIC

Location: Port Angeles, WA
Association member: Diane Nagler
Operation: First Street Haven Restaurant
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 14 years
Seats: 142
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch

To say that the First Street Haven Restaurant is cozy might be an understatement. The establishment is 10½ feet wide. "It's real cozy," says owner **Diane Nagler** with a laugh. "You have to have a good sense of humor to work here."

Although the waitstaff working at the First Street Haven might not have much room in which to maneuver, they do have a smoke-free environment. "This is such a small place that when I asked people as they came in if they wanted smoking or nonsmoking, they would laugh," says Nagler. Last August, Nagler made the place 100 percent nonsmoking and has not had one complaint. "I was a little worried, but the response has been wonderful," she says. She based her decision mostly on the health needs of her employees and because she felt the time was right for a completely nonsmoking operation.

Business has been up every year at the establishment, she says. Changing the menu frequently to include fresh flavors, such as those in Thai cuisine, helps jazz up the regular California eclectic menu. In the summertime, tourists waiting for the ferry to Victoria, Canada, pass the time in the restaurant's Victorian interior, with its rich woods and stained glass. "They're trapped here until the ferry comes, but we try to make the wait enjoyable for them," says Nagler.

—Jennifer Batty

Pizza-box revolution

In the name of convenience and environmentalism, the traditional cardboard pizza-delivery box is changing in shape, substance and even function.

Domino's Pizza has gone octagonal, shaving the corners off the standard pizza box to save materials and money. Pizza Hut is using recycled cardboard for its boxes and looking for ways to reduce its container's weight without lessening its stability.

But perhaps the most imaginative pizza-box innovation is by Eric Crockett of Toledo, Ohio. Crockett has added tear-away perforations to the pizza-box lid, enabling the customer to convert the lid into four

serving "plates." The box's side flaps form a rim for the plates that can be held by inserting the thumb and index finger through holes. And, of course, these throwaway pizza plates require no washing.

—Wall Street Journal

Hotel 2020

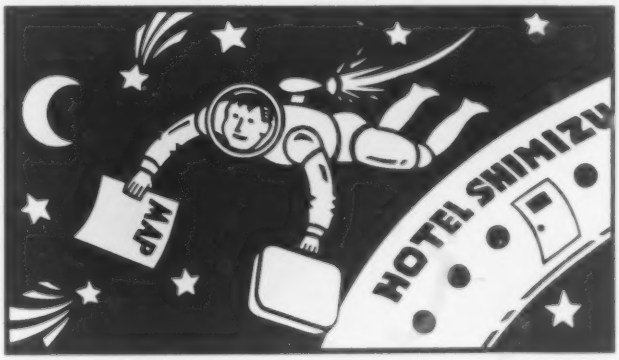
One day in the not-too-distant future, the ultimate family vacation may require much more than a station wagon, a road map and tickets to Disneyland. Travelers of the future may need a space shuttle and maps of the moon.

Japan's Shimizu Corporation has already outlined its plans to build the first hotel in space by the year 2020. The hotel would house up to 64 guests and include modern amenities such as toilets, showers, desks and liquid-screen television monitors—as well as the special treat of a window looking down on planet Earth.

Shimizu has had engineers investigating such a project since 1987. Hotel rooms would be built on the rim of a giant 462-foot-diameter wheel, rotating through space in order to generate gravity for the guests. The 7,500 tons of raw materials needed to build the structure would come from the moon.

Travelers to the hotel could expect to pay an out-of-this-world $45,000 for a visit.

—Washington Times



Flexible soul

Traditional American "soul food" is hard to define, but it encompasses the myriad dishes that have evolved from the kitchens of black Americans for hundreds of years: quickbreads, collard greens, Hop'n John and hominy grits, for example.

Although many soul-food dishes have traditionally been prepared with fatty meats and lots of salt, today's soul-food fans are finding that properly prepared soul food can be both comforting and nutritious.

For example, quickbreads are a good source of complex carbohydrates, and collard greens contain hefty amounts of vitamins A and C, folic acid and calcium. The hearty yam, too, is an excellent source of vitamin A. In addition, soul food's flexible nature makes it easy to use lean cuts instead of fatty meats and to replace salt with a dash of lemon instead.

—Diabetes Forecast

Service, please

It's not surprising, but efficient service is what frequent business travelers appreciate most when it comes to hotels, airlines and rental-car companies.

A survey conducted by Opinion Research Corporation polled 400 executives about their most important travel concerns. With regard to hotels, preparing an accurate bill was deemed most important (mentioned by nine out of 10 respondents). For airlines, on-time arrival was the concern mentioned the most (89 percent).

Other important hotel desires mentioned by more than 75 percent of respondents were efficient check-in, reliable message and wake-up service, and caring about customers.

Participants in the study were true business-travel experts, with the average respondent having logged 45 days of business travel in the past year, including 34 nights in hotels.

—Cornell Quarterly

Symphonic slices

As principal clarinetist for the Dallas Symphony, Stephen Girko produces notes for a living. In his spare time, however, it's his pizzas that help him earn applause.

Girko began a sideline catering business known as Eat My Pizza! in June of 1989 that combines Girko's clarinet-playing with pizza-making in an aural and culinary feast. Girko prepares gourmet pizzas for his clients (most of whom are symphony regulars) using homegrown tomatoes, Italian sausage, pepperoni and plenty of mozzarella. And for dessert? It's *musique a la mode:* a clarinet recital by the chef himself.

—Entrepreneur

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Seminars scheduled during the National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show

Two-day seminar (5/18–5/19)
SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation
(Two-day, 16-hour certification course; deadline for registration is May 1.)

Saturday, 5/18

Full-day seminars
Banquet Management
Dining Room Management
Food Cost Management
Profitability
NEW! SERVSAFE/Responsible Alcohol Service

Half-day seminars
Kitchen Management
NEW! Legal Issues for Foodservice Operators
Promoting Your Restaurant
NEW! Service that Sells
The Labor Issue
NEW! Train-the-Trainer

Sunday, 5/19

Full-day seminars
Food Cost Management
Kitchen Management
Profitability
SERVSAFE/AFS Train-the-Trainer
Successful Buffet Management

Half-day seminars
Dining Room Management
Promoting Your Restaurant
Service that Sells
NEW! Stress Management
Theft Control

For further information on Show seminars, contact the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association, 250 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60606, or call (800) 765-2122; in Illinois, call (312) 715-1010.

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For more information on specific study groups, contact Philip Kralovec at (312) 853-2525.

The Executive Study Groups present semi-annual professional development programs for executives who would like to meet with their industry peers to share ideas and concerns. Executives in each of the aforementioned disciplines from member foodservice companies are welcome and encouraged to participate.

Note: *A new study group focusing on international development is currently forming. Any persons interested in participating in this group are encouraged to contact Philip Kralovec.*

COURSES AND BOOKS AVAILABLE

Certification Courses
Applied Foodservice Sanitation (AFS)
Applied Foodservice Purchasing
Controlling Costs in Foodservice
Effective Foodservice Marketing
Foodservice: A Managerial Approach
NEW! Foodservice Management Accounting
Foodservice Supervision: Achieving Success through People
Introduction to the Foodservice Industry/ Introduction to Foodservice Management
Legal Aspects of Foodservice Management
Management by Menu
NEW! Managing Foodservice Facilities and Equipment
Managing Quantity Food Operations
NEW! Nutrition for the Foodservice Manager
NEW! Principles of Professional Cooking

Self-Development Courses
Protecting Restaurant Profits: Managing Security
Effective Communication
Managing People
Restaurant Operations and Control
Restaurant Purchasing
Bar and Beverage Management
Helping People Grow
Service: Managing the Guest Experience

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Senior Director Jeffrey R. Prince
Editor (on leave) Sylvia Rivchun-Somerville
Acting Editor Paul Moomaw
Managing Editor Melanie A. Crosby
Staff Contributors
Jennifer Batty, Elizabeth Gordon, Robert E. Harrington, Larry Himelfarb, Philip Kralovec, Andrew McLauchlin, Nancy Michalski, Susan Mills, Anne Papa Curtis, B. Hudson Riehle, Denise Roach, Linda Way, Diane Welland
Art Direction
Magazine: Tom Bellucci
Covers: Richard Earle, Liz Dalgetty
Administrative Assistant Susan Kessler
Editorial Secretary Ronda Bowers
Word Processing Operator Agnes Harkins
Intern Zari Malsawma

Editorial office and association headquarters 1200 Seventeenth St., N.W. Washington DC 20036-3097 (202) 331-5900
Chicago office 150 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2000 Chicago, IL 60601 (312) 853-2525

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Michael E. Hurst, owner
15th Street Fisheries, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Gearing up for the Show

Excitement is mounting for the upcoming 72nd National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show to be held in Chicago's McCormick Place from May 18 through May 22. This "Show of Shows" will feature almost 1,900 exhibitors on four huge floors, giving the approximately 100,000 attendees a look at all the latest in foodservice products, services and equipment.

Some of the highlights of the Show include the opening-day program with guest speaker Larry King, the American Culinary Classic, the 21st annual Culinary Arts Salon, the Salute to Excellence Forums and dinner, the Theatre Series, the Management Clinic, educational seminars and much more. Get all the Show details beginning on page 26.

The Show provides foodservice professionals with the chance to meet and share common concerns as well as learn about the freshest ideas in products and equipment. You can't afford to miss out on this opportunity to forge new friendships and make valuable contacts. Send in your Show registration form today to ensure your place at this important event.

Association calls for reform of teen-labor regulations

In reaction to a call for further teen-labor regulations and more severe criminal penalties for violations, foodservice industry representatives testified on March 19 at a Senate subcommittee hearing and asked that Congress not overregulate teen labor and thereby eliminate teenage jobs.

We think that the laws governing teen labor are antiquated and need to be updated to apply to contemporary work situations. To this end, we have submitted a proposal to the Secretary of Labor with eight changes we would like to see made in federal regulations.

Minimum wage hike effective April 1

Operators should note that the federal minimum wage went up on April 1 from $3.80 to $4.25, and the tip credit increased from 45 percent to 50 percent. The association is still lobbying to have the wording of the law changed so that businesses grossing less than $500,000 a year will be exempted from federal wage requirements.

Parental-leave legislation under consideration

On March 20, the House Education and Labor Committee approved a bill that would require employers with 50 or more workers to provide 12 weeks of unpaid leave per year to employees to care for ill children, spouses, parents or for personal illness. The Senate is working on a comparable bill.

We have been monitoring this legislation and anticipate that it will be passed by Congress and vetoed by the President, as it was last year. We need to make our opinions known on this issue. Although we sympathize with the problems facing working parents, we think that providing better day-care options, rather than unpaid leave, is the solution.

Operators air concerns at ADA symposium

More than 100 foodservice professionals had the opportunity to share concerns and ask questions at the association's ADA Symposium, held on March 7 in Washington DC. Regulators explained the proposed

Great Menu Contest winners

regulations for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and answered questions from attendees.

This year's Great Menu Contest garnered almost 600 entries from around the United States and abroad. The contest judges, drawn from the trade press, food media and restaurant design industries, met in our association's Washington DC office to select the winners. The first grand-prize winner was China Coast Restaurant, operated by General Mills Restaurants, Inc., of Orlando, Florida; second grand prize was won by Embassy Suites Indianapolis and third grand prize was awarded to Boogies Diner, headquartered in Joppa, Maryland.

Three prize winners were selected in each of nine categories and will be on display along with the grand-prize winners at the Show. Be sure to stop by and see the winners.

Visit the association's booth

While you're at the Show, check out the National Restaurant Association's booth #3004. Information about our services will be available, and the "We're glad you're here!" program will be featured at the booth.

Anyone who comes to the booth and joins the association during the Show will be eligible to win a comprehensive computer package including an IBM PS/2 hardware system donated by IBM Inc.'s Retail Foodservice Division, as well as food cost management software from FOOD•TRAK and additional software from CaterMate and Great Plains Software.

In addition, staff members of the educational foundation will be at the booth with information about two new programs: SERVSAFE/Responsible Alcohol Service and Foodservice Management Professional (FMP) certification.

Responsible Alcohol Service is a training program designed to train owners, managers, bartenders and servers how to develop and implement responsible alcohol policies and procedures in their operations. The FMP certification program recognizes and certifies foodservice executives, managers, corporate trainers and educators who have demonstrated a high level of professionalism through their experience and education.

Complete details on both programs will be available at the booth. If you can't make it to the Show, call the foundation at (800) 765-2122 for information.

In March, 96 new members joined the association. We welcome all of you and hope we have the chance to get to know you at the Show in May.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Hurst

Michael E. Hurst
President and Chairman of the Board

COVER STORY: MAKE HISTORY AT THE 1991 SHOW

26 For 72 years, the annual National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show has been the place to feel the heartbeat of the industry. Now more than ever, in these competitive times, the Show's exhibits and educational programs can rejuvenate you and your business with the latest products, ideas and techniques. This Show preview and schedule will help you make your plans to attend.

SPECIALS

12 Restaurants in historic buildings
A foundation of history has brought these three establishments the flavor of success.

17 Noise levels in restaurants
One customer's music is another customer's noise. Before you adjust the volume, lend an ear to your patrons to discover the right amount of sound.

20 The restaurant around the corner
All across America, customers are returning to their neighborhood restaurants, where everyone's a regular and comfort is key.

24 Hiring a top-notch contractor
There's more to a good contractor than a sharp set of nails. When it's time to renovate or repair your restaurant, get to know your contractor before the sawdust starts to fly.

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Cover photo: Sixth annual National Restaurant Association Show, 1924
Inset: 1990 Show

Chefs gather at symposium on global cuisine

World-class chefs Paul Bocuse of France and Hans Bueschkens of Canada were just two of the many standout chefs who participated in the American Culinary Federation's (ACF) Symposium on Global Cuisine, held recently in Tampa, Florida. Premier chefs from the United States, China, France, Canada and Germany met to discuss nutritional trends, food products and cultural differences in cuisine.

Chef Paul Bocuse, voted French chef of the century — last year, spoke to symposium attendees about the changing role of the chef.

Bueschkens of Canada is well-known for his efforts as culinary ambassador for the World Association of Cooks Societies (WACS). "This symposium was important because we could discuss the changes coming to the industry, and we got views from around the world," says Bueschkens. "The biggest change in the future will be the adaptation of our cuisine to Far Eastern cooking, with its fresh ingredients, light seasonings and stir-fry preparation. People are becoming more nutrition-conscious, and this style of food preparation will become more appealing," he says.

Many of those attending the conference were apprentices who hoped to grab some gems of wisdom from the master chefs. The symposium was an important educational opportunity for these aspiring culinarians, says Bueschkens. "Young culinarians have much better opportunities than we had. People are eating out more because they have more leisure time and take more vacations. They have more chances to practice their craft," says Bueschkens.

Keith Keogh, the ACF's Southeastern regional vice president, was the moderator and coordinator of the event. Keogh also serves as team manager of the 1992 Culinary Team USA. Keogh says the event was "a unique opportunity to interface with some of the world's most influential chefs."

New poster breaks language barriers

Restaurateurs who encounter language problems at their establishments may be interested in a new poster designed exclusively for restaurants.

"Spanish/English for the Restaurant" is a 17-by-24-inch poster showing translations of more than 400 words and phrases for meals, foods, beverages, cooking methods, table settings, cleaning procedures, janitorial equipment, kitchen appliances, and verbal exchanges between managers and customers. The poster is designed to facilitate communication in either English or Spanish.

Printed on coated paper, the poster can be put in areas of interaction between customers and employees, and in places where employees talk to one another.

Each poster is available for $9.95 (California residents add sales tax), plus $2.00 for shipping and handling, from Translation Posters (specify Restaurant Poster), P.O. Box 1745(R), Lucerne Valley, CA 92356. For more information, call (619) 248-9018.

The benefits of saying "no"

Just by accurately answering "no" to three health questions, National Restaurant Association members and their employees under 55 (who work at least 30 hours per week) can enjoy the benefits of the Group Term Life Insurance Plan. Spouses of members and employees are aiso eligible, if they meet the same requirements.

Plan benefits include complete life insurance protection at a low cost, and rates are reduced even further for nonsmokers. Members may choose either the $50,000 or the $30,000 plan.

To find out about the three questions and for more complete information, call plan administrator Albert H. Wohlers & Co. at (800) 323-2106 or (708) 803-3100, or write to 1440 N. Northwest Highway, Park Ridge, IL 60068.

California restaurants are conserving water

In response to drought conditions, many California restaurateurs are actively taking steps to conserve water. Serving water to patrons only upon request is the most popular strategy. In such hard-stricken areas as the Central Coast, stronger measures are being taken, including the use of low-flush toilets, faucet flow restrictors, low-use dishmachines, recycling of "gray water," switching to disposables, and replacing plants with landscaping that requires no water.

If water allocation problems persist, operators may have to consider even more measures, including curtailing operating hours, charging for glasses of water and restricting restrooms to customers only. Drought veterans of the Bay area and Central Coast emphasize, however, that there is a limit to how far they can reduce water consumption without conflicting with sanitation requirements.

The California Restaurant Association is helping restaurateurs with water-saving strategies. A special report entitled *Conservation Guidelines: Saving Water and Energy in Restaurants* lists tips for saving water in every area of the operation. The report is free for the asking. Contact the California Restaurant Association at (800) 794-4272 or (213) 384-1200.

Soviet hospitality delegates visit Florida

A delegation of 17 top Soviet hotel and hospitality personnel sent by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev has been visiting South Florida for a condensed hospitality course at Nova University. As part of their trip, the delegation recently visited Grove Calloway's Adventure Bar & Grill in Coconut Grove, Florida, for hands-on experience on what makes an American restaurant tick.

Soviet hoteliers discuss restaurant development with Ground Up Associates management.

At Grove Calloway's, personnel from Ground Up Associates, the restaurant's management company, discussed inventory, scheduling and other hospitality topics with the Soviet delegation. "We're flattered to have had this unique opportunity," says Bob Green, president of Ground Up Associates. "They were so receptive to our methods that we are presently exploring the possibility of visiting the

(continued)

BOARDROOM

Hurst addresses food editors

Association president Michael E. Hurst traveled to Dallas last month to deliver a "state of the industry" address to a meeting of food editors, writers and broadcasters from across the country.

Attending the annual International Food Media Conference were approximately 120 journalists from national and regional media outlets, including the *Houston Chronicle*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, the *Baltimore Sun*, the *Orange County Register*, the *Dallas Morning News*, *Prevention* magazine, New York's WCBS radio and ABC-TV's "Home" show.

Hurst's presentation featured seven segments, each focusing on a different aspect of foodservice, and each included association statistics that had never before been released. The focus of his talk, entitled "Is the Golden Age of Fine Dining Over?," centered on industry reaction and adaptation during the current recession.

"The golden age of dining out is not over," Hurst told his audience. "Fine-dining establishments, although declining in number, will continue to meet the demands of people celebrating special occasions, entertaining important guests or merely seeking fine food.

"In another sense, too, the golden age continues in the many restaurants that are changing to more casual concepts. By changing menu mix, service and ambience to provide less elaborate meals in less formal surroundings at lower prices, operators are broadening their appeal."

Other topics addressed by Hurst included nutrition among major fast food chains, service in restaurants, the association's menu analysis, nonsmoking sections, children in restaurants and alcoholic-beverage consumption.

On the first evening of the conference, the food journalists were treated to a spectacular "Taste of Dallas" reception and dinner, hosted by the National Restaurant Association. Southwestern and Tex-Mex dishes were served by top Dallas establishments including Actuelle, Baby Routh, Blue Mesa Grill, Brazos, Cafe Margaux, The Conservatory, Dakota's, The French Room, Jennivine, L'Entrecote, Mia's Tex-Mex, The Mansion on Turtle Creek, Monte Carlo, Quadrangle Grille, Routh Street Cafe and Sfuzzi. The recipe that follows is just one of the many standout dishes that were featured at the "Taste of Dallas" reception.

—Anne Papa Curtis

WAHALOTE PARSNIP ENCHILADAS WITH OVEN-DRIED CRANBERRY SERRANO SALSA

Yield: 12 enchiladas

Ingredients:

For the enchiladas

4 ozs. canola oil
1 yellow onion, finely diced
2 poblanos, roasted, peeled and diced
1 cup parsnips, roasted and diced
1 Tbs. garlic, roasted
2 ozs. ancho-quajillo paste
12 ozs. turkey breast, grilled and diced
6 ozs. Chihuahua cheese, grated
2 ozs. goat cheese
3 Tbs. cilantro, chopped
12 corn tortillas

For the salsa

1 cup cranberries, oven-dried
2 serrano peppers, minced
1 cup pears, peeled and pureed
1 Tbs. cilantro, chopped
2 ozs. chardonnay
1 Tbs. onion, diced
2 ozs. turkey stock
1 Tbs. lime juice

Method:

For the enchiladas

Heat 1 ounce of the oil in a saucepan. Saute onions and poblano peppers until onions are transparent. Transfer to mixing bowl. Mix parsnip, ancho-quajillo paste, garlic, cilantro and both cheeses. Season turkey breast with salt and pepper, and grill until medium. Dice and mix with all other ingredients. Separate mixture into 12 equal portions.

In a saucepan, heat remaining oil at approximately 350° F. Submerge corn tortillas one at a time for approximately 3 seconds. Take out of hot oil and let drain on paper towels to absorb excess oil. Coat tortillas with ancho-quajillo paste. Lay out on a sheet tray and roll equal parts of turkey mixture in each tortilla. Sprinkle grated Chihuahua cheese on top and set aside until ready to serve.

For the salsa

Peel pears and puree in a blender with the chardonnay. Pour into a saucepan, add remaining ingredients and bring to a boil. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Serve at room temperature with enchiladas.

—Courtesy of Baby Routh

Soviet Union on a consulting basis for various properties."

The stop at Grove Calloway's was one of a series of stops at area restaurant and hotel facilities that have conducted seminars on procedures such as front desk operations, marketing and housekeeping. The Hospitality School of Nova University, which is hosting the delegation, condensed a six-month program into just a few weeks to meet the Soviet delegation's time constraints.

Saving a choking victim gets cheaper

The price of a video outlining the Heimlich Maneuver for helping choking victims has been lowered for members of the foodservice industry.

As a result of the many calls received in response to the recent article "The Heimlich Maneuver: Part of a New Standard of Service?" (see February ***Restaurants USA***), AIMS Media has lowered the price of its video entitled *The Heimlich Maneuver: How to Save a Choking Victim* to $79.95 for members of the foodservice industry.

In addition, quantity discounts and rentals of the video are available. For more information, contact AIMS Media at (800) 367-2467 or (818) 785-4111. Ask for tape 9712.

Address your comments about ***Restaurants USA*** and current foodservice issues to: ***Restaurants USA*** Feedback, National Restaurant Association, 1200 17th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. Submissions for publication may be edited for length.

Symposium informs restaurateurs about ADA

More than 120 foodservice industry members converged on Washington DC on March 7 for the National Restaurant Association's symposium on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to learn what the new law has in store for their businesses.

The law, signed by President Bush last July, will require most restaurants to make their services accessible as of January 26, 1992, to persons with disabilities and will prohibit job discrimination as of July 26, 1992, on the basis of a disability.

In late February, the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) proposed regulations that stipulate how ADA will affect restaurants and other public places.

Concerns aired

With the proposed rules barely one week old at the time of the symposium, operators, managers, architects and others in attendance had a forum for airing their concerns about the law's well-intended but vague requirements.

Attendees peppered John Wodatch of the Justice Department and Naomi Levin of EEOC, the chief authors of the proposed regulations, with questions about exactly how the new law will affect restaurant operations.

For example, John Curry, director of facilities for Bob Evans Farms in Columbus, Ohio, voiced the concerns of multi-unit operators about potential conflicts between ADA's federal accessibility requirements and the requirements of state and local building codes. Ted Papit, president of Unigate Restaurants in Dallas, asked for guidance on defining the essential and the nonessential functions of a job, to avoid unintended discrimination.

On these and many other points, regulators Wodatch and Levin were unable to give definite answers. Instead, the regulators explained that their agencies will enforce the law on a case-by-case basis, a policy the National Restaurant Association fears could lead to a sharp increase in lawsuits.

John Wodatch of the Department of Justice (standing) answers questions from (left to right) Tom Daly (Hilton Hotels), Ralph Brennan (Mr. B's) and John Curry (Bob Evans Farms) about ADA's accessibility requirements.

Marriott's James DeLuigi questions regulators about ADA's impact on foodservice.

Photos by Sonny Odom

Naomi Levin of EEOC attempts to explain ADA's employment rules. Levin: "There's simply no way to make this crystal clear."

functions of a job before beginning to recruit employees.

Mark Pitzer from the Internal Revenue Service told operators about tax incentives—up to a $5,000 tax credit and a $15,000 deduction per taxable year—available to help businesses pay for renovations to existing buildings made to accommodate workers or customers with disabilities.

Jean Mahoney of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, an independent federal agency charged with promoting employment of disabled workers, urged operators also to take advantage of organizations that can help recruit qualified persons with disabilities. Mahoney recommended contacting the appropriate state agencies via the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation at (202) 638-4634, and she recommended calling the President's Committee's own Job Accommodation Network at (800) JAN-7234 for advice.

—Andrew McLauchlin

"I know you don't like answers like 'It depends,' " said Levin, "but that's how it has to be, since we will determine each case on its own merits. There's simply no way to make this crystal clear."

Strategies for compliance offered

Participants also talked strategy with employment and engineering experts about how to best prepare for ADA's requirements.

"I strongly recommend that you start bringing your establishments into compliance with the law now," warned employment-law specialist Betty Southard Murphy. "The sooner you review your restaurant operations the better."

Murphy, who has served both as chief of the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division and as chairman of the National Labor Relations Board, advised operators to discuss ADA's hiring requirements with managers and to make detailed job descriptions specifying the essential

DC ROUNDUP

☐ *Small-business exemption correction pending.* With the federal minimum wage increasing from $3.80 to $4.25 on April 1, the National Restaurant Association and other business groups have turned up the heat on a yearlong lobbying campaign to restore an ironclad exemption for small businesses from the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

When Congress amended the FLSA in 1989, lawmakers expanded the small-business exemption to include most businesses that gross less than $500,000 a year. In the process, however, Congress inadvertently applied the FLSA to any employee who engages in interstate commerce—even if he or she works for a business that grosses less than $500,000.

As this issue of ***Restaurants USA*** went to press, 40 senators had cosponsored the Senate version of the exemption (S. 349), and 52 representatives had signed on in support of the House version of the bill (H.R. 1237). The association was pressing for a vote on the legislation before the end of March.

☐ *Maximum teen-labor penalties increased.* The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) formally announced February 28 that as of March 1, it will consider assessing civil penalties of up to $10,000 per violation per employee for particularly serious violations of federal teen-employment regulations.

A 1990 amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act increased the maximum penalty from $1,000 to $10,000. According to the law, the $10,000 maximum applies to violations occurring on and after November 5, 1990. Fines assessed by DOL on violations that happened before November 5, 1990, will continue to reflect the previous $1,000 maximum.

DOL says it will take into account the size of the firm and the seriousness of violations in determining the amount of civil penalties to assess.

☐ *Don't overpay alcohol-inventory tax.* In a March 4 letter to the National Restaurant Association, the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) urged restaurants that sell alcohol not to pay too much in federal alcohol-inventory taxes.

Under a provision of last year's budget bill, Congress required restaurants, bars and other alcohol sellers to pay taxes on the alcohol they had in stock on January 1, 1991. The tax must be paid by June 28.

BATF says many alcohol sellers have failed to claim available exemptions and tax credits. Businesses are exempt if their entire stock of distilled spirits, wine and beer totaled fewer than 500 gallons on January 1. All businesses with inventories of more than 500 gallons can offset their tax bill with credits. For more information, contact BATF's Tax Processing Center at (513) 684-6580.

New ideas about nutrition

The newly released third edition of the 1990 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* represents a bold step forward in the area of public health. The revised guidelines differ from earlier versions in that they give more direction and more food-specific examples than in the past.

Overall, the most significant change introduced in the 1990 guidelines is the switch to a more positive presentation. Rather than noting foods to avoid, the guidelines now include lists of foods to choose or use sparingly when following a healthy diet. Also, the recommendations are more total-diet oriented, emphasizing balance and moderation.

For foodservice operators, the specific nature of the new dietary guidelines makes it easier to put healthy choices on the menu. With a few simple changes or additions, items can be tailored to meet the criteria. Listed are the seven recommended guidelines, followed by ways in which foodservice operators can adapt them:

1. Eat a variety of foods.
2. Maintain healthy weight.
3. Choose a diet low in fat, saturated fat and cholesterol.
4. Choose a diet with plenty of vegetables, fruits and grain products.
5. Use sugars only in moderation.
6. Use salt and sodium in moderation.
7. If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

Foodservice operators should strive to provide a wide variety of foods on their menus. Of particular importance to restaurant patrons following the dietary guidelines are the vegetable, fruit and bread groups that will make up the bulk of their meal. These foods also add much-needed fiber to the diet. The guidelines recommend that the average adult eat at least three servings of vegetables and two servings of fruit a day.

Sugar and salt are other concerns. According to a National Restaurant Association survey, more than 60 percent of nutritionally committed patrons wish that restaurants offered menu items cooked without salt.

Although the dietary guidelines do not give any specific recommendations for sodium, the National Academy of Sciences suggests that Americans take in no more than 2,400 milligrams of sodium a day (about a teaspoonful of table salt). Current consumption rates range anywhere from 3,000 to 6,000 milligrams per day.

With the exception of yeast breads, salt can be eliminated from almost all recipes without altering texture, appearance and other physical properties. Operators trying to cut down on the amount of salt they use should start out very gradually. Reduce the amount of salt used by half and then slowly decrease the amount until it is eliminated. Since salt occurs naturally in food, getting enough salt in the diet is not a problem.

In addition to cooking without salt, operators can avoid salty processed foods. Homemade stocks, soups, sauces and gravies are much lower in sodium than their canned or powdered counterparts. Other ways to satisfy patrons who want to reduce their salt intake are: Season foods with fresh or dried herbs and spices; use flavored vinegars; avoid high-sodium foods such as cured meats, pickled foods and canned goods; and use reduced-sodium products for items like soy sauce, broths and soups.

The empty calories provided by sugar are another cause for concern. Those interested in following a healthy diet will want to avoid excessive intakes of refined sugar, which can lead to tooth decay and obesity.

Chefs often add sugar unnecessarily to soups, stews and sauces. In most cases, this sugar can be significantly reduced, if not cut out completely, without sacrificing the quality of the recipe. In other cases, spices that enhance sweetness can be used to replace sugar. Cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, ginger, anise, fennel and mint are among the "sweet" spices. For meats, fruit-based chutneys and spreads with no added sugar can easily be substituted for sugary glazes and sauces.

Cooks who wish to reduce the sugar in desserts and baked goods can offer items naturally sweetened with fruit. Fruit-based tarts, sorbets, cobblers and custards can be prepared with little added sugar and no loss in flavor. For a simple, refreshing dessert, serve fresh or juice-packed canned fruit or fruit salad. As a stand-in for sugar-laden cakes and pies, try offering quick breads and muffins flavored with fruits and spices. Often the sugar called for in a rich dessert recipe may be cut by one-quarter to one-third without affecting the product. With a little experimentation, the foodservice operator can reduce the sugar in many high-calorie desserts.

Using artificial sweeteners as an alternative sweetening agent is another option for foodservice operations catering to the health-conscious. Saccharine, aspartame (Nutrasweet) or the recently approved acesulfame-K (Sunette) are widely available artificial sweeteners. When using these sweeteners in recipes, cooks should test the product first, since some sweeteners may leave a bitter or metallic aftertaste. Also, aspartame is unable to withstand high temperatures, so it has limited applications. One of the best ways to offer sugar substitutes is to provide them to patrons who wish to use them in place of table sugar.

By reading labels, foodservice operators can become aware of foods that contain hidden sugars. These sugars may appear in the form of honey, syrup, glucose, dextrose, fructose, corn sweetener, molasses and fruit-juice concentrate.

The National Restaurant Association's publication *A Nutrition Guide for the Restaurateur* offers guidance for menu modification. Methods of delivering nutrition information to patrons are outlined in the association's *Ingredients and Nutrition Information* booklet. These publications can be purchased by calling (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960.

For a single free copy of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, write to the Consumer Information Center, Department 514-X, Pueblo, CO 81009.

—Diane Welland, R.D.

A taste of adventure

While waiting tables during high school, Carolyn Claycomb wished she were in the back of the house preparing food instead of in the front of the house serving it. Traveling to Europe with her husband, Claycomb's interest in food was fed further by all the culinary delights she sampled in various countries. This interest led her to become a chef and to open Carolyn's restaurant a year and a half ago in Columbus, Ohio.

Claycomb's knowledge of food and cooking has changed and evolved, but her main philosophy of cooking has not. "Food is meant to be enjoyed and to be fun. I never take it so seriously that I can't have fun with it. I try not to overanalyze food, because it should be a source of pleasure," she says.

Part of Claycomb's fun with food comes from changing the menu daily to focus on whatever style of cooking has caught her fancy at the moment. One thing that does not change is her use of seasonal, fresh ingredients in her contemporary American cuisine.

"I change the menu every single day, but it is always contemporary. I enjoy so many different kinds of cuisine—I like dealing with all kinds of ethnic food. I'll get on a kick about some kind of food for a while because I'm excited by the cuisine, and that will be reflected on the menu," she says.

Focusing on the use of fresh, high-quality, seasonal ingredients saves her money, she says, because there is less waste. "I use everything. I find ways of using scraps in other dishes to stretch out the food. By buying seasonal foods, I save money because they are readily available and thus less costly," she says. To save money, Claycomb recommends that chefs experiment with local produce and less expensive cuts of meat to make appetizing and low-cost entrees.

Carolyn Claycomb

Carolyn's is in a 100-year-old building in the German Village area of Columbus. Although the building is charming, its advanced age can make for high operating costs. Claycomb says that taking good care of her equipment and having it serviced regularly helps to rein in costs.

The upscale restaurant's decor is modern except for a huge antique carved wooden bar that, with the exception of Claycomb's food, is the focal point of the restaurant.

Claycomb says that she doesn't think her method of cooking will ever settle down to just one style. "I like experimenting and changing too much to just cook in one style," she says. She does think that over time restaurants will change by "swinging back from the interest in homestyle cooking. I think customers are finally going to realize that 'Gee, this really is homestyle food and I can get this at home, so why am I here?' When they are eating out, people will want to have food that they can't have at home, maybe because the ingredients are hard to come by or because they don't know how to cook in that particular style. Then cooking will go back to uniqueness and adventure." And when the next wave of customer insurrection begins, Claycomb will most likely be among the intrepid culinary leaders who are satisfying patrons with a taste of adventure.

—Jennifer Batty

If you would like to be featured in this column, write to Jennifer Batty, ***Restaurants USA,*** 1200 17th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036.

PHYLLO NEST FILLED WITH SMOKED SHELLFISH AND SUN-DRIED TOMATO/ROASTED GARLIC SAUCE

Serves 8

Ingredients:
- 4 sheets phyllo pastry
- 2 lbs. smoked shellfish (Claycomb uses a mixture of shrimp, scallops and mussels)
- Unsalted butter, melted (as needed)
- 3 Tbs. dried bread crumbs
- 1 head garlic
- 2 ozs. sun-dried tomatoes, rinsed
- 2 cups heavy cream
- ½ cup cider vinegar
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 1 tspn. unsalted butter
- 1 shallot, chopped
- 4 ozs. butter
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

For phyllo nests

To prepare phyllo nests, cut each sheet of phyllo into 8 squares. Lightly brush 8 ovenproof cups with melted butter. Brush 1 phyllo square with melted butter. Sprinkle with bread crumbs. Place in a prepared cup. Brush and stack 3 more squares of phyllo into the cup. Prepare 7 more phyllo nests in the same manner. Bake at 350°F for 10 minutes, or until phyllo is golden. Remove nests from cups.

For pastry filling

To prepare filling, place garlic in a 350°F oven and bake for 45 minutes, or until soft. Squeeze pulp from garlic head. Place in food processor with the sun-dried tomatoes and process until finely chopped.

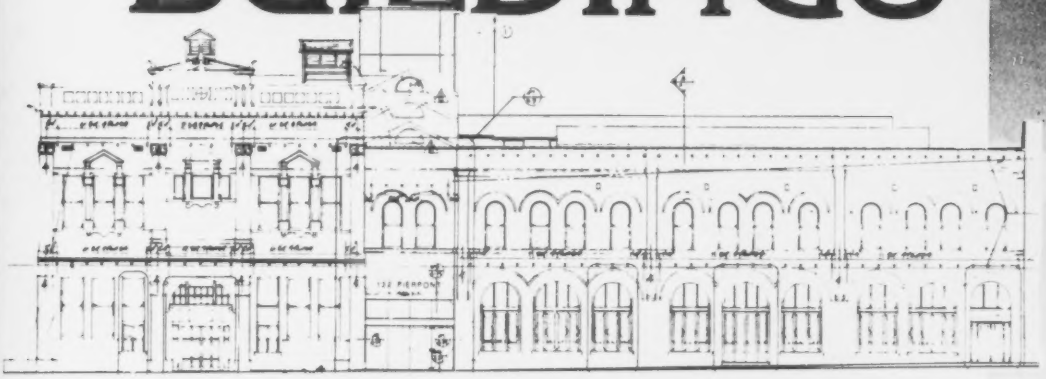
Over low heat, reduce cream to 1 cup. Saute shallot in 1 teaspoon of butter. Add vinegar and wine. Add reduced cream. Simmer 5 minutes. Strain. Gradually whisk in butter. Add the sun-dried tomato-garlic mixture to the sauce. Season with salt and black pepper to taste.

Stir the smoked shellfish into the sauce. Place mixture in the prepared phyllo nests. Serve immediately.

—Courtesy of Carolyn Claycomb

Nutritional analysis per serving: 557 calories, 28 grams protein, 27 grams carbohydrate, 39 grams fat, 720 mg. sodium, 213 mg. cholesterol

RESTAURANTS IN HISTORIC BUILDINGS



HISTORY FLAVORS THESE EATING PLACES

by Mary Kincaid

Nothing makes a stronger design statement than opening a restaurant in a historic building.

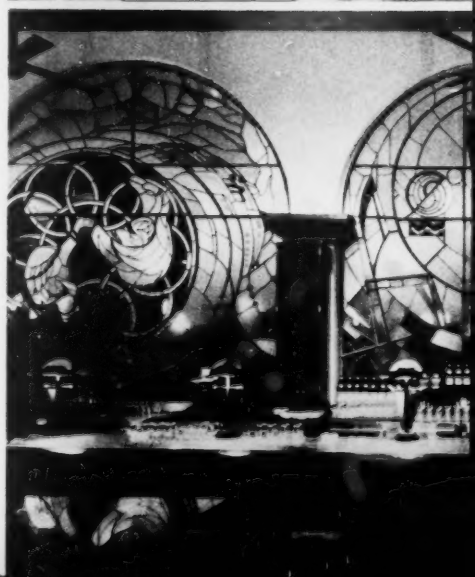
A landmark location gives patrons a reason to try a restaurant, regardless of what is known about the establishment. "You can depend on the food to bring people back to a restaurant the second time, but it is the design that invites them in and sets an agreeable mood the first time," says architect M. Louis Ulrich of FFKR Architects/Planners in Salt Lake City.

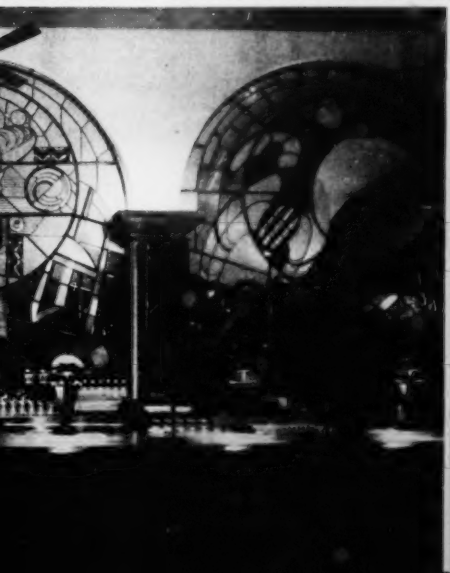
In addition, a 20 percent tax credit for rehabilitating a historic site brings a gleam to the eyes of some restaurant investors as they envision renovating a forlorn structure into a new restaurant. Carrying out such a transformation, however, and qualifying for registration with the National Trust for Historic Preservation in order to get a tax break, requires time, research, skillful design, money, paperwork, paperwork and paperwork. In Salt Lake City, in Cleveland and in Lexington, Kentucky, three such efforts have attracted an appreciative clientele and community praise.

A high school turned trattoria

The company Gastronomy, Inc., was responsible for transforming the building that housed Salt Lake City's first high school into the Cafe Pierpont and the Baci Club and Trattoria, now one of the most popular dining spots in Utah's capital city. By the time owners John Williams, Tom Guinney, Thomas Sieg and Marco Schienz tackled the 1897 Pierpont Building (which now houses the restaurant, club and cafe) as a rehab project in a historic district, they had already honed their skills on several previous rehabs-into-restaurants, all of which are now thriving. The owners decided to turn this historic spot into an Italian trattoria and to rent the upper floors for office space.

Things went well at first. First Security Bank had confidence in Gastronomy's track record with rehabilitations, and historical research seemed to have produced the necessary documentation for a historic site. But the initial bid for registration with the National Trust for Historic Preservation failed, in spite of the pages of architectural feature documentation,





The Baci Club and Trattoria and the Cafe Pierpont are located in a former Salt Lake City high school building.

Groined arches and a back-lit glass clock impress first-time diners at the Trattoria.

Colorful suspended glass panels separate the bar and dining areas.

Photos by Douglas Kahn

At Cleveland's Haymarket Restaurant, in the art deco Landmark Office Tower, bar patrons may be seated in a former bank vault.

photos and history submitted. Gastronomy appealed, going to Washington DC a second time, after six months of additional research to locate examples of registered structures with similar characteristics. They won the appeal, agreeing to make some window changes. In June 1986 the building was registered, and the $2.7 million restoration began. But not without considerable effort.

Co-owner John Williams had visited Italy, where the food, wine, seductive architecture and art tempted him to bring Italian ambience to Salt Lake City. Confident that the American craze for Italian clothes, cars, furniture and pasta would make an Italian restaurant work, Williams took key staff members from Gastronomy on a second Italian trip to evaluate what could best be adapted in Salt Lake City. Following that, trips to Italian restaurants in Chicago and on both coasts helped them to gauge what items would be most likely to appeal to American taste buds. For example, the group determined that Americans prefer more sauce on their pasta than Italians do, and Williams was perfectly willing to accommodate. "It's not our job to educate the clientele, but to please them," Williams says.

But creating an Italian trattoria from the print shop, sheet-metal shop and warehouse that had successively occupied the former high school building posed a series of problems. A vast, awkward cavern confronted the owners and the architect.

"Our biggest problem was to make the tall interior space interesting," says architect Ulrich. Floor-to-ceiling columns interfered with a graceful use of the space. But Ulrich solved that problem by designing groined arches, based on the columns, that curve upward to create an enchanting resemblance to Northern Italian ceilings.

To make the battered and warped warehouse floor reflect an Italian mood, the firm used a poured terrazzo floor.

To bring people all the way in to the 375-seat restaurant and club, a central staircase was added, creating more interest. Topped by a back-lit, etched colored-glass clock that is nine feet in diameter, the stairs not only present patrons with an eye-catching conversation piece, but they also lead adventurous patrons up to a new mezzanine where artwork both there and below gives diners a piquant reward for the eyes.

The coatrack problem

Having already drawn customers in with the fascinating ceiling and staircase, Ulrich faced another, more practical, challenge: "Coats create a real design problem with restaurants," says Ulrich. Fortunately, Ulrich found a Utah manufacturer to extend the height of the 16 imported Italian lamps, modifying them to hold coatracks. At an eight-foot level, the lamps now cast a pleasant glow on diners, who can also eye their wraps.

When the weather warms, those choosing to dine alfresco find a perfect spot on a long deck transformed from the former loading dock; it's another eyesore made appealing.

A magical solution was used to solve a restaurant problem that is special to Utah, where by law a restaurant's bar area must be separated from the main dining space. To solve this design challenge, graphic designer Rob Magiera and glass artist William Lettig were commissioned, and with three others they spent six

Photos by Mort Tucker

months sandblasting, beveling and leading three 13-foot glass panels. Suspended in such a way that they reflect and refract light, the panels separate teetotaling diners from legal drinkers.

One of the most attention-getting maneuvers in the Baci Trattoria success story was the use of the neighboring Phillips Gallery as a liaison between regional artists, the architect and the owners. From names suggested by gallery director Bonnie Phillips, Ulrich and Williams selected seven artists, including painters, a ceramist and a graphic artist, who collaborated on an Italian-themed, 40-foot, mixed-media mural. Merging skills and artistic personalities to create an eye-catching melange of figures, trompe l'oeil arches and still life brought useful publicity to the artists and Baci Trattoria.

A Cleveland classic

Cleveland diners are now able to enjoy a drink within the solid surroundings of a bank vault at the Haymarket Restaurant in downtown Cleveland. The owners of the Haymarket revamped a site within Landmark Office Tower, which was listed with the Register of Historic Places. Because of the building's status, some special paperwork had to be submitted to allow for the revamping.

Submitting an application for the National Register of Historic Places brought no pain to Don Klier, then manager of the Haymarket Restaurant. By hiring a consulting firm specializing in such application work, the owners and the architect saved time and effort. "We had only to send Benjamin D. Rickey & Co. the architectural documentation and sketches, adding some information by phone, so we had no problems there," recalls project architect Alan Fodor of Herman Galvin Gibans, Inc.

Letting someone else take care of the application was a wise move, because review bodies in Cleveland could easily overwhelm a neophyte hoping to make use of a historic building. In addition to approval from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the State Historic Preservation Office, projects in Cleveland may face a design review board in a Public Land Protected District, the Fine Arts Advisory Committee of the City Planning Commission and the Cleveland Landmarks Commission. An unwary owner could encounter a delay as long as six months. On the other hand, some of the advice from a series of reviewers might prove highly valuable. If no public money is involved in a project, the routine is shortened.

Landmark Office Tower, an art deco building, stands as a downtown centerpiece, its exterior virtually unaltered since construction in the 1920s. The building even includes its original metal window surrounds.

Trouble arose, though, when time came to make holes in the walls to install ventilation. This part of the structure had been occupied by Midland Bank. "We planned to retain the vault area as the bar, keeping steel security boxes in place," says architect Fodor. "But when demolition began to make ventilation holes, we found concrete and steel-plate walls 18 inches thick—very difficult to get through," recalls Fodor.

Ceilings posed another problem: They were too low. To manage air-duct space and still allow headroom, the Haymarket renovation crew had to use special flattened ducts, covered by acoustic panels and drywall. Setbacks during ventilation, electrical and plumbing procedures all contributed to making this a million-dollar project.

A happy discovery in the renovation of the old building came during the researching of old drawings that revealed forgotten doorfront grills. Unearthing the buried treasures and cleaning the exquisite bronze grills made them into restaurant highlights. The grills are now screens dividing two of the three dining areas. Dark wood paneling on the restaurant's perimeter walls sets off the many brass, bronze and copper antique materials saved from the original structure. Spotlighted against the wall, they complement screens and the antique railing rimming the raised dining area. Clients tread on dark red carpeting to reach tables where they savor, among other presentations, veal rollatini, a signature dish on the Continental menu.

Opened in 1988, the Haymarket attracted downtown shoppers and office workers at lunch and early cocktail time. But foot traffic diminishes shortly after five in downtown Cleveland. Because of the historic-building designation, the Haymarket is not allowed to use bold signage that would announce its presence to motorists whizzing past.

Initially, this requirement for low-key signage was a problem. "The gold-leaf sign on our front window just failed to attract people," says Don Klier. "For months we waited for dinner clientele. Our problem vanished when the new mall and the Ritz-Carlton opened in adjacent buildings, bringing a surge of business at dinnertime."

These openings and increased print advertising have overcome the problems of the Haymarket's discreet signage. Evening parking, another common problem in downtown Cleveland, has presented no difficulty since the Haymarket began offering valet parking in the building's garage after nine-to-five workers have cleared out the garage each day.

A Lexington landmark

At Dudley's Restaurant, the anchor

spot in Lexington, Kentucky's Dudley Square, tourists and townspeople enjoy celebrating special occasions. The Italian architectural style, the 1881 construction and the rich history that included a founder of the Daughters of the American Revolution, assured the former Dudley School a place in the National Register.

Debbie Long and John Sheay happened along just as the $1 million renovation project was nearing completion as a shopping center. Needing an alluring restaurant as anchor for Dudley Square, former owner and developer Richard Hurley agreed to lease space to Long and Sheay.

"We started on a shoestring," Long recalls, "and we had to borrow money and labor to make it work. We really had no operating capital, and it's amazing that we've survived, with only $42,000 to launch the restaurant."

Although John Sheay had restaurant management experience at a New York Hyatt, and both Sheay and Long had worked in Denver restaurants, their debut as owner-operators brought them a new viewpoint on business.

An early shock came during the job of transforming the basement into a kitchen. "It was like a catacomb!" says Long. Instead of venting through side walls, as they had planned, they were required to carry the ventilating and hood system up to the third-floor roof to meet health codes. Venting at the roof level, above 14-foot ceilings, made the project much costlier than they had expected. Ducts now run through the middle of the dining room, hugging the inside wall.

A second surprise to Sheay and Long was the amount of labor involved in making some unique bar tables. "We made a wonderful discovery in retrieving marble slabs from the school's former bathroom stalls," Long recalls. Long hours were involved in cutting 12 tabletops and making tables from the slabs themselves, with the help and guidance of hired carpenters.

The ½-inch-thick mirror mounted behind the bar took even more labor to prepare. The mirror and the solid-oak bar top took eight to ten hours a day for two-and-a-half weeks for them and a visiting relative to strip, refinish and install.

Getting the 100-seat dining room and bar ready for the 1981 opening happened only as the result of much love and labor donated by friends and family. Once the restaurant opened, labor costs, breakage, labor turnover and taxes meant more unexpected headaches. Having become enchanted with the old school building and having taken the courage to create a restaurant, Long and Sheay had expected to draw a breath of relief once the restaurant opened. Instead, they have faced the daily business struggles that all restaurateurs deal with.

One innovation that keeps Long content is a courtyard dining spot that owes its existence to the fact that the former school building had a schoolyard. Dudley's has used the space well, opening an outdoor dining area two years after opening. That step increased the spot's popularity and led other restaurants to open terraces. "Ours is the best, though," says Long, "since the courtyard is bordered by three huge 100-year-old tulip poplars that shade it. Those trees and the grass are very refreshing and beautiful." Beautiful as it is, that former schoolyard (which seats 60) brings added income only on the 45 days a year that are certain to be dry but not sizzling.

Dudley's Restaurant features the traditional in both decor and cuisine, and there is no attempt to re-create a schoolroom atmosphere in the two dining rooms. Customers enjoy fresh vegetables, seafood, pasta, steak and roast beef.

As a special ongoing feature, local artists display their work in changing exhibits. Because so many customers are involved in horse racing, a large donation of win pictures adorns the bar area.

The sounds of the winter heating system emerge from original clanking radiators, which seem to amuse clientele. Although carpeting covers the dining-room floors to mute such noise, the entryway's handsome maple flooring and stairway, as well as the beaded-board pine wainscoting, remind visitors of the former school's elegance.

Two sections of the building, 10 feet apart, feature an adaptation: doors that have been cut into walls, with a five-by-eight-foot glass atrium connecting them. The fact that plans for this change passed muster with the Bluegrass Trust, which oversees historic-building designations in Lexington, is due to the fact that the small nook is not prominent or easily seen from the street. Since exterior signage is not allowed, Dudley's features a lighted signboard on the corner of the lawn.

The rehab challenge

In the three cases above, lovely restaurants have emerged from the confines of a historic architectural site. It cannot be overstated, however, that such projects are a considerable challenge for both restaurateur and architect. According to David Evans of Ann Arbor, Michigan's architectural firm Quinn Evans Architects, which specializes in preservation work, a person considering a rehab project always faces a question: Is it worth the expense to save and adapt an old building to meet today's safety standards and fire codes?

Evans has seen a variety of snares during his 15 years of historic-renovation experience. He points out that owners often open a restaurant on the first floor of a historic building, planning upper floors for later renovation as office or living space. Unaware of the tight code requirements for such uses and for their separation from restaurant areas, owners learn too late that meeting such requirements can drive costs out of sight. Evans warns that codes and deed restrictions must be anticipated in the early planning stage. Of course, retaining original architectural details and conforming to historic use does not necessarily mean that contemporary design or alteration is forbidden.

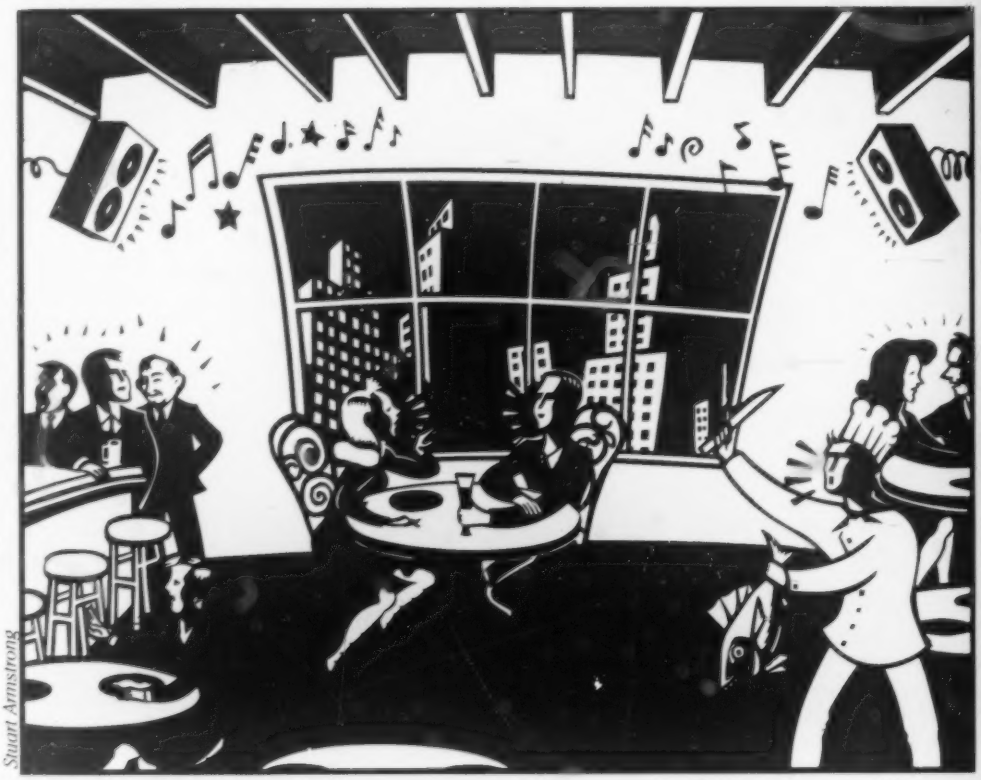
On the positive side, rehabilitating an old structure brings countless advantages to the community, and rehabilitating a structure as a restaurant can reinforce historic pride in a particularly tasteful way. ❑

Mary Kincaid is a writer in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

NOISE LEVELS IN RESTAURANTS

WHAT'S THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF SOUND?

by Julie Fintel



Stuart Armstrong

A businessperson hoping to close a deal probably would not take a client to a restaurant where patrons stand three deep at the bar, rock music is turned up loud and kitchen noises compete with the noise of customers talking, shouting and laughing. On the other hand, a young stockbroker seeking to unwind after a hectic week might seek out just such a restaurant. What's noisy and annoying to one person is lively and exciting to another. The restaurateur who wants to know whether to turn the volume up or down must take a look at the people who frequent the establishment and why they come there.

Noise in a restaurant seems to be an issue in judging restaurants these days. Restaurant critics are mentioning it when they write reviews. For example, in a review of New York City restaurants in *TRAVELER* magazine, restaurant critic Mimi Sheraton had high praise for TriBeCa Grill but called it "hectic and deafening." She had good words for the food at Ferrier, but she also mentioned "the unending din and elbow-to-elbow seating." She called two other new hot spots "insanely noisy."

Whether a restaurant is noisy or not should depend upon the concept of the restaurant, says designer Andrew Young of New York City. Noise is one of the elements that, combined with decor, food and service, give a restaurant a certain feel or mood. For example, restaurants seeking to convey the feel of a bistro or a pub intentionally allow the noise level to be high. But a restaurant designed as a cozy, intimate retreat takes steps to hold down the noise.

Hand in hand with the role noise plays in atmosphere goes the role of noise in retaining a certain clientele. Restaurants geared toward young people are designed to be full of vitality—and that may translate into a high decibel level. If the clientele is mostly businesspeople, the noise level must be low enough that patrons can talk business while having lunch or dinner.

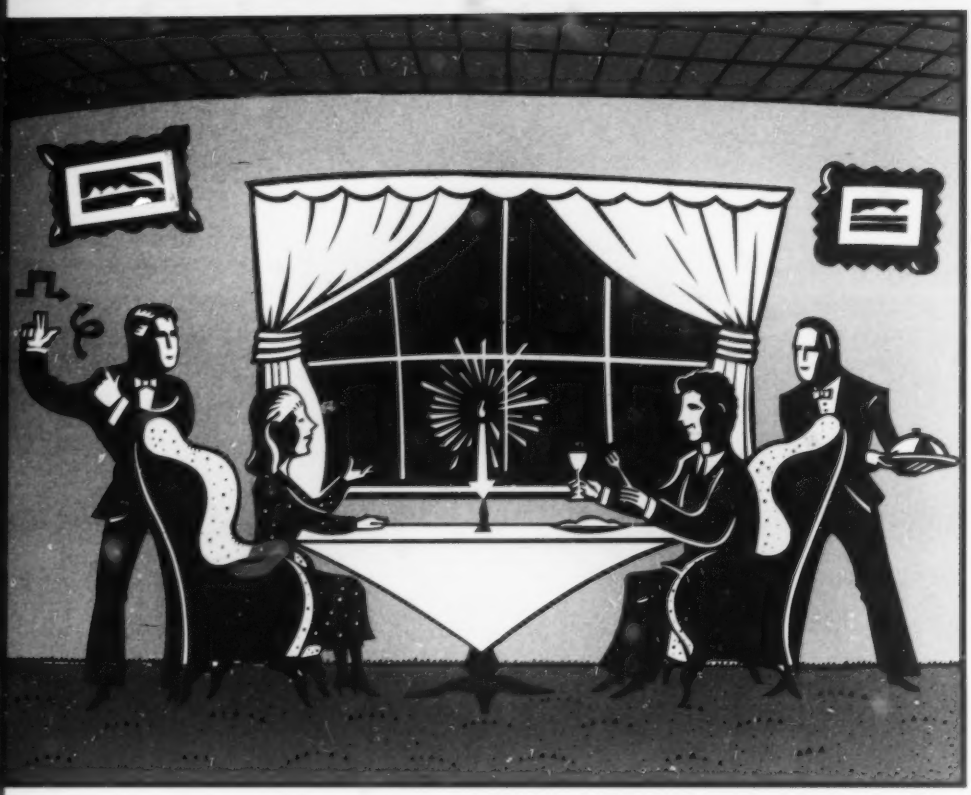
Adjusting the noise

Designer Young rehabilitated a restaurant (now called Beaches) in Palm Beach, Florida, that was not succeeding because the concept was not in tune with the market, which he described as "a very up crowd, a mix of young and old." As part of its change to a fun and funky place, the new restaurant adjusts the sound level of the music depending on the crowd it wants to attract. For example, the music is turned down at lunch and in the early evening, when an older clientele comes in. Later in the evening, to bring in the younger crowd, music volume is turned up.

Restaurant critic Sheraton says she has been monitoring noise in restaurants for the past seven or eight years, and she thinks that restaurants are getting noisier. When Sheraton goes out with her friends, they go to places where they can talk, she says. "But I don't like them dead either," she adds, "where you feel you have to whisper or else you will be overheard."

Where does noise in a restaurant come from? It comes from background music, conversations among customers, servers talking to each other, the clanging and clattering of dishes and silverware, and kitchen sounds such as exhaust fans and the banging of pots and pans. Once the sound is made, the way the interior is constructed will determine how the sound reverberates.

Hard surfaces make a restaurant noisier. Joan Vieweger, vice president of Perspectives/The Consulting Group, Inc., in Los Angeles, thinks the popular Mediterranean look, with



brick walls, tile floors and bare wooden tables, is one reason restaurants seem to be getting noisier.

High energy, high noise

Restaurant owners usually do not ask designers to create a "noisy restaurant," says Vieweger. Instead, they refer to an atmosphere of "high energy with lots of activity," she says. For some restaurateurs, a noisy atmosphere is the goal. Kevin Finch is the general manager of Border Grill in Santa Monica, which was voted the noisiest restaurant in the Los Angeles area by the *Los Angeles Times*. "Border Grill is a really casual, fun restaurant, and noise is a part of it," he says. Doug Roth, co-owner of Chicago's Bistro 110, adds, "People like places that are lively and upbeat; they make you feel good."

When restaurants begin to fill up, people begin to talk louder to be heard. So a full restaurant is often a noisy restaurant. People are attracted to restaurants that are crowded. The Border Grill may be one of the Los Angeles area's noisiest restaurants, but it is also one of the most popular, and part of the noise comes from people having a good time. "I like having too many people. If a restaurant is quiet, people ask, 'What's wrong?' " says Finch. The Border Grill even has a special party table built to seat 20, which Finch acknowledges can add to the noise when its occupants begin to loosen up.

At North Star Pub in New York City's South Street Seaport area, some customers have complained about the noise, but manager Deven Black doesn't intend to change anything. He explains that part of the problem comes from people crowded into the small area, speaking louder and louder to be heard. "I could reduce the number of customers," he says. "But that wouldn't be good business."

North Star Pub's decor also contributes to its noisiness. Built to resemble an English pub, it has bare wood tables, tile floors, 10-foot ceilings made of plank wood, and a bar where customers often stand to eat. Tablecloths and carpeting would cut down the noise, but it would also alter the pub-like atmosphere. Roth feels the same about tampering with the feel of his restaurant, Bistro 110. "We are a bistro, and people expect bistros to have hustle and bustle," he says, although he has added acoustical tile to the ceiling and put a few runners here and there on the bare wood floors to cut down on the noise somewhat.

Roth is also a believer in restaurants as theater. He thinks his French bistro environment helps transport people away from their workplace and the problems of the world.

Wolfgang Puck's latest restaurant, Eureka Restaurant & Brewery, in West Los Angeles, reflects the extroverted personality of the famous chef. The decor, designed by Puck's wife Barbara Lazaroff, uses high-tech materials in a neo-industrial style. The floors are slate, tables are bare wood, and a glass-brick wall separates the dining area from the bar. An open kitchen is responsible for the clanging of pots and pans, and the sounds of meats and fish sizzling on a grill mingle with the noises of the crowds. "If you want a romantic evening, we're not what you're looking for," says spokesperson Krestin Beaton. "We're fun and entertaining."

Carrying the idea of restaurants as theater to the extreme is another Los Angeles restaurant known for its high noise level—California Beach, a Japanese restaurant where earsplitting rock and roll is played and the sushi chefs lead cheers, clap along to the music, chug beers and yell raucous things in Japanese.

Besides adding to the atmosphere, noise sometimes has another function: It can be used to turn over tables more quickly. Diners are less likely to linger after a meal if the noise makes it difficult to talk.

Some like it quiet

Newman's La Bonne Auberge customers say the Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, restaurant is one of the quietest they have ever been in. To achieve the quiet, local designer Susan W. Welzien of S.W. Wells Design Associates put cushions on all the doors to keep them from slamming, put the kitchen in the rear and separated it from the dining area with a double wall. Welzien put the air compressors seven feet above the ceiling and moved the work area, which used to be in the middle of the dining room, to the back behind an insulated wall. In addition, the restaurant is carpeted, and it features an acoustically quiet ceiling. The waitstaff do their part by not talking to each other in the dining room, substituting hand signals in-

stead, and the kitchen workers do not yell in the kitchen.

Another restaurant known for its quiet is Notes, in the Sunset Marquis Hotel in West Hollywood, California. Paradoxically, a large part of the clientele of the hotel and restaurant are rock stars. The hotel was made famous by the rock band the Eagles in their song "Hotel California." "This is the home of rock and roll in California," says food and beverage director Giles Beeker. "Anybody who's anybody in the music industry stays here." Beeker says that when his famous clients dine, they want privacy. They need quiet because they often discuss business deals over a meal. Large Georgian wing chairs, loveseats for two, padded walls and a subdued color scheme give Notes a hushed, clubby atmosphere.

Carlucci's in Chicago, on the other hand, wanted an atmosphere that was casual but sophisticated—more on the side of liveliness than an inner sanctum. It was built in an old warehouse with a high ceiling—one large open space. But owner Joe Carlucci soon found he was losing customers because the restaurant was so noisy. "They would pull me aside and say, 'I loved your place—the atmosphere and the food—but I won't be back because it's too noisy. I can't do business here or talk to my family or friends.' " Carlucci put acoustical tile in the ceiling, moved the bar to the front (away from next to the dining room) and divided the open space into two dining areas. "I think people are becoming more sensitive to noise," Carlucci observes. "There needs to be some noise for liveliness and excitement, but too much noise becomes intrusive."

Turning down the sound

The more hard surfaces you have in your restaurant, the more noise you'll have. "Sound control is simple," says designer Adam Tihany of New York City. "Sound is created by the sound waves bouncing from surface to surface. So if you want it to be quieter, have as many soft and absorbing surfaces as possible, so the sound will stop bouncing."

Here are some ways to make your restaurant more acoustically comfortable if it is now noisier than you would like.

Draperies, upholstery, carpeting, rugs, tablecloths and padding underneath the cloths are some easy additions that soften sound. Use walls for soundproofing by covering them with padded fabric. Even artwork on canvas absorbs some of the sound. Tapestries are effective, too. Joan Vieweger, vice president of Perspectives/The Consulting Group, Inc., in Los Angeles, has used tapestries made of special sound-absorbing material like that used in recording studios. Large areas of glass act as reflectors of sound. Use draperies on windows or counter the effects of glass with soft surfaces elsewhere.

Installing acoustical tile in the ceiling is probably the most effective way to dampen sound, since the ceiling is usually the room's largest surface. Tiles can be put above a ceiling's surface as well as below.

Because the bar is almost always the noisiest area in a restaurant, keeping it away from the main dining area, or putting up insulated walls between the bar and the rest of the restaurant, can keep the noise from bothering diners.

Another way to cut the volume is to not encourage large parties or to separate them from the other diners. If you don't have an area set aside for large groups, consider movable partitions.

If people request a quiet table, don't put them near a large party or near the kitchen or service area.

Set a quiet mood for your restaurant with colors and lighting. Tihany says lighting is an underutilized method of bringing quiet to a restaurant. "Have you ever noticed," he asks, "that when the lights go down, people start to speak lower?"

Instruct the service staff to be more quiet. Servers should not yell to each other or to the cooks in the kitchen. They should refrain from letting the dishes and silverware bang against each other.

Insulate walls that separate the kitchen from the dining room with sound-absorbing material. Install a sound-absorbing ceiling in the kitchen, too. Dishwashers and ventilation fans should be mounted in such a way that they don't vibrate and cause excess noise.

Place tables farther apart. Diners seated close to other diners sometimes speak louder to be heard by their companions.

Break up a large area into smaller areas. Introduce nooks and crannies, curves, or a divider wall that juts out.

Turn the music down or off. The direction that speakers are aimed could make a difference, too. Vieweger recommends that owners of large restaurants consult a sound engineer for help in customizing a sound system.

A balance

Some restaurants have even found ways to make both the party lovers and the peace-and-quiet lovers happy. Designer Adam Tihany of New York City says that in Europe there are restaurants with both noisy areas and quiet areas. He likens the arrangement to having a smoking and a nonsmoking area. These European restaurants have a formal dining room with tablecloths, carpeting and generous space between tables. The same restaurants also include a bistro-like area with bare tables and bare floors. When Tihany designed the three Bice restaurants for New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, he followed the European idea, incorporating a quiet fine-dining area and a livelier bistro area into one building. Tihany also likes to create a diversity of spaces in a restaurant, with some spaces designed for large parties and some set aside for quiet, intimate dining.

Whether your restaurant is a hub of activity or a sanctuary from the busy world, don't overlook the role of noise. If yours is designed to be a lively gathering spot, but you are losing customers because people are complaining about the noise, then it probably would be wise to take steps to dampen the sound. If yours is a restaurant so quiet you can hear a pin drop—and tables sit empty night after night—perhaps it's time to add a spark of energy in the form of some carefully planned noise. Finding the right amount of sound is a matter of knowing your customers. ❑

Julie Fintel is a writer in Burke, Virginia.

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THE RESTAURANT AROUND THE CORNER

NEIGHBORHOOD RESTAURANTS ARE BACK IN STYLE

by Melanie A. Crosby

In these days of stiff competition and tight dollars, it takes more than just good food to bring customers in and keep them. It takes genuine hospitality, and few operations serve up a more heaping helping than the neighborhood restaurant—the friendly joint around the corner where neither the food nor the size of the bill ever comes as a surprise.

The *1991 Zagat New York City Restaurant Survey* makes special note of the significant number of establishments that are focusing not on widespread fame and culinary glitter but on neighborhood locals and the comforts of home. This trend toward neighborhood restaurants is happening well beyond New York, though, as casual neighborhood spots spring up from coast to coast. This is not so much an emerging trend as a re-emerging one; new operators today are discovering the secrets that many "neighborhood" restaurateurs have known for years.

The term "neighborhood restaurant" means different things to different people, and there are many facets to this local institution. Such a spot can be anything from the local lunchtime watering hole to the evening lingering spot, or it may be a special celebration destination. It's the place where the locals go, and it's the place where neighbors and friends meet.

"Our whole concept was to create a place where the neighborhood could come for something to drink and eat at a reasonable price," says Karyn Wagner, owner of Joe's Bar & Grill in New York City. "We wanted to make the whole experience so good they would come back again and again. So far, it's worked." Wagner estimates that about 80 percent of their business comes directly from the restaurant's West Village neighborhood. The restaurant has built its loyal following in just 15 months.

When Craig Bero, owner of the year-old restaurant Anglers & Writers, also in New York, opened his new establishment, he too hoped to create a neighborhood cafe. Apparently he has succeeded. According to Bero, 90 to 95 percent of his clientele are neighbors from Manhattan's West Village. "Our neighborhood is filled with artists, writers, journalists and theater people who are looking for a place to relax," says Bero. That's what he provides at Anglers & Writers.

Bero is also the owner of Village Atelier, a more upscale restaurant which he says is also a neighborhood joint. "At least 80 percent of my clientele at Atelier are regulars," he says. "I see some of the people at least two or three times per week. Even in snowstorms, we're packed. They're lined up outside waiting to get in."

Neighborhoods across America

Restaurants outside New York City know the value of the neighborhood as well. At the Hyde Street Bistro, in the Russian Hill neighborhood of San Francisco, the neighborhood has been a key to success since the establishment opened in 1989. "We have a very strong neighborhood following," says owner Albert Rainer. "It's very difficult for a new restaurant to get a loyal following, especially in San Francisco where there are so many choices and so many restaurants opening and closing."

Rainer estimates that 70 percent of his guests live in the neighborhood or at least the local area. The clientele is quite diverse, as is the neighborhood,

Fishing, literature and conversation provide the theme for Anglers & Writers, a homey neighborhood restaurant in Manhattan's West Village.

and includes young people as well as wealthier retirees. "The idea behind the restaurant was to create a restaurant that would represent the neighborhood. We have a very diversified guest list," he says.

Bob Shaughnessy, owner of The Other Place Pub in Boylston, Massachusetts (east of Worcester), has known the secret of neighborhood regulars for the 11 years he's been in business. "We have a lot of regulars here," he says. "This is the Boylston edition of 'Cheers,' " he laughs. "We have all the regular characters." Shaughnessy says at least 65 percent of his customers are locals, and many have been around for a long time. "This is a very friendly place," he says. "Everyone knows everyone else."

Customers are also drawn back time and again to The Wishing Well in the North County area of St. Louis. The restaurant has been in the same location for all of its 35 years, and it's a neighborhood landmark—or rather a landmark of what the neighborhood used to be. "This neighborhood has gone through many changes," says owner Stephen Molina, "but we haven't. We're still here, and we're still doing things the same way."

At The Wishing Well, a bit of the "old neighborhood" is still going strong, as most of Molina's core of regular customers have since moved out of the North County neighborhood but still come back to the local restaurant hangout. "Many of our customers are second and third-generation diners," says Molina. "They remember being here in booster chairs, and now their kids are in booster chairs. And their parents still eat here, too."

Coy's Steakhouse in Little Rock, Arkansas, is also a neighborhood landmark. "Coy's is known all over the state," says Trudy Moore, director of marketing for the steakhouse, "but most of our business in Little Rock is local. We have very loyal customers." Coy's, she says, is known as the place to go for a special occasion. "If there's something to celebrate, they come to Coy's," she says. Sixty percent of Coy's business comes from local celebratory banquets.

Know your neighbors

What is the key to the success of these neighborhood joints? It's the neighbors themselves, the customers—and successful neighborhood operators take extra steps to get to know their customers as they would the people next door. "Getting to know the people and building on that relationship is what's important," says Anglers & Writers' Bero.

How do you make a customer a neighbor? First and foremost, you learn the person's name. "If you ask people what their favorite restaurant is or where they like to go, they will say 'where they know my name,' " says Albert Rainer. His Hyde Street staff makes a special point of learning patrons' names, drawing them from reservation lists and business cards. "When guests come in for the second or third time, we will call them by name," says Rainer. At Anglers & Writers, everyone is on a first-name basis, even the few famous folks who drop in every now and then. The same is true at nearby Joe's Bar & Grill. "We know all of our neighborhood regulars by name," says Karyn Wagner, "and they know us. They know exactly which table they want and its number."

Taking care of the regulars

Neighborhood customers are the "in" crowd of the neighborhood establishment, and many restaurants offer these regulars special deals and promotions to which outsiders are not entitled. Coy's Steakhouse sends mailings to its regular customers about once a month. The mailer often advertises a special deal for mailing-list customers only, such as buy-one-get-one-free specials. During Christmas of 1990, Coy's sponsored a "Get Mugged at Coy's" promotion, which entitled each customer who purchased $50 worth of gift certificates to receive a gift box of four Irish coffee mugs already wrapped and ready to go under the tree.

The Other Place Pub offers its regulars a Supersaver Supper Club card, which contains 30 numbers. Each time a customer eats in the restaurant, one number is punched with the Pub's special punch. Every fifth meal is a free lunch; every tenth meal is a free dinner. "The card encourages those guys that come in for lunch every day to come back for that free dinner," says Shaughnessy. Each dinner purchase of $4.95 or more also gives the diner a chance at the week's lucky-number drawing. The winning number is posted for several days, and customers must come in to see it.

In addition to special deals, regular customers are also often treated to special events—as if they were part of the family. This past Christmas, Joe's Bar & Grill held a tree-trimming party and invited all its regular customers. Each customer was asked to bring an ornament to add to the tree. "The tree looked great," says Wagner, "and each customer could see how he or she had contributed. They'd bring friends in and say, 'See, there's my ornament.' " On a smaller scale, Joe's serves a special Sunday night "soup and sandwich supper" designed primarily for the neighborhood regulars, and there are many spur-of-the-moment gatherings. "It's very much a 'Hey, what's happening at Joe's this week?' type of thing," says Wagner.

Craig Bero, too, believes in celebrating with the regulars. Although New Year's Eve is considered by many restaurateurs to be the most lucrative night of the year, Bero takes it off the books at the Village Atelier and invites all of his regular customers to a party at the restaurant. "It's to show them what great customers they've been all year," he says.

A home away from home

Atmosphere is an important element in a successful "neighborhood" restaurant. Decor can vary widely, but comfort is the key. Neighborhood restaurants are an extension of the neighborhood and an extension of home—casual, familiar and comfortable. "This is a very homey place," says Shaughnessy of the Other Place Pub's warm tavern-like atmosphere. The decor at Bero's Village Atelier is reminiscent of a country inn. Accord-

ing to Bero, dining at the Village Atelier "doesn't feel like you're eating in a restaurant; it feels like someone's home."

Many neighborhood restaurants actually resemble neighborhood homes. Both Joe's Bar & Grill and Anglers & Writers are housed in historic areas of New York's Greenwich Village, and the owners were restricted from changing the understated storefronts when they took over the sites. Such constraints, however, add to the establishments' neighborhood appeal. "We have a very unobtrusive storefront with a very small window," says Wagner of Joe's. "You really have to know where this place is to find it, and the neighborhood does." "We don't even have a sign out front," says Bero, "just a little plaque by the door. But our customers know where to find us."

For Bero, it's important that his neighborhood restaurants look and feel like home on the inside as well as outside. Tables are never pushed together, and lounge areas with comfortable couches are provided for customers. Although each of Bero's establishments could easily double its occupancy level, Village Atelier seats only 38, and Anglers & Writers seats only 45. "People like space," says Bero. "It helps them relax."

Bero's couches encourage conversation as well as relaxation. The restaurants offer no gimmicks and no music, he says, to allow this different sort of entertainment to flourish. "I believe a cafe without music becomes a cafe with music," says Bero, referring to the melody of conversation. "People tend to linger, and I encourage it," he says. One communal table at Village Atelier begins the night empty but eventually fills with "people who somehow all know each other," which allows for great interaction and "spontaneous things to happen intellectually," he says. A centerpiece of Anglers & Writers is an antique rolltop desk filled with books and writing instruments that customers are welcome to use.

For many customers and operators, a homelike atmosphere is closely linked with nostalgia. Many successful neighborhood spots concentrate on old-fashioned "comfort" foods of days gone by and serve traditional American fare such as burgers, soups and pies. "Many of our recipes date from the 1920s. I even run an ad in the *Dispatch* with a picture of my grandfather to show people that things haven't changed," says The Wishing Well's Molina, who believes that the restaurant's commitment to the old ways is the major reason the customers keep coming back. "We still do things the way restaurants used to do them," he says.

Joe's Bar & Grill specializes in classic cocktails like Manhattans and martinis and in simple, uncomplicated foods like chicken pot pie and Caesar salad prepared tableside, foods that Wagner says "don't overwhelm the experience."

Nostalgic decor often plays a part in the "neighborhood" restaurant. Wagner describes her establishment as "an updated '90s neighborhood saloon" with brick walls and tapestry banquettes providing extra warmth. "They say that everything old is what's new again, and that's the way we think here," she says.

Anglers & Writers' atmosphere is reminiscent of the small fishing village in Wisconsin where Bero grew up. The restaurant "looks more like something you'd find in the North Woods of Wisconsin than in Manhattan's West Village," says Bero. "It's the kind of place where I could talk to my grandfather about who was catching what fish that day and what farmer was having trouble with his crops." The cafe even houses an extensive collection of old fishing gear.

A comfortable price

In today's uncertain economic climate, customers have become exceedingly more value-conscious, and neighborhood operators have obliged by providing good value. A comfortable price is as important as a casual atmosphere. Craig Bero opened Anglers & Writers as a less expensive alternative to Village Atelier. He refers to Anglers & Writers as a "tea room," where just about everything on the menu is priced between $6 and $7. At The Wishing Well in St. Louis, a complete meal costs less than $15, including drinks. "We like to think of ourselves as providing gourmet food

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without the gourmet prices," says owner Molina. San Francisco's Hyde Street Bistro offers its dishes for less than $25 per person, a moderate price in the Bay area. Value is of utmost importance to Rainer, and he tries to keep prices as reasonable as possible. "Our guests are always pleasantly surprised when they get the check," he says, "and our lower prices make us available to many people."

Some neighborhood operators have introduced new, less expensive dining options to their local areas. For example, Anglers & Writers offers an afternoon tea—a novelty in the Village. Diners are served a full English tea complete with fresh scones and a plate of sandwiches for $10. "We're booked up months in advance," says Bero. "Many customers make the tea an early dinner."

Service with a smile and a familiar face

Value, of course, goes beyond good food and low prices. Customers pay for the total dining experience, and service can often make or break a value. At neighborhood restaurants, customers are, by definition, neighbors, and they expect to be treated as such. A familiar face and a smile will bring them back again. "We're very friendly people here," says Karyn Wagner of the service staff at Joe's. "We're very un-New York. People say 'hi' and 'bye' to you here. People greet you at the door. Our customers are special people when they walk through that door."

The Other Place Pub's Bob Shaughnessy agrees. "One key to our success is the service," he says. "We've had a lot of the same help here for the 11 years we've been

Bob Shaughnessy takes the time to get to know the regulars at The Other Place Pub in Boylston, Massachusetts.

here, and everyone knows everyone else." The Wishing Well's Stephen Molina has several servers who have been on the staff for more than 20 years. "They've been here a long time, and they're good servers," he says. "They are one reason we have so much repeat business." Rainer's Hyde Street Bistro also has strong regular staff members who have become familiar to the customers and have developed a reputation for going out of their way to make dining an enjoyable experience. "After all," says Rainer, "we are not just selling food and wine, we are selling hospitality; and that requires more effort."

Hospitality does indeed require more work, but at successful neighborhood restaurants, the extra effort seems effortless. Rainer says many of his customers request vegetarian dishes or are on restricted diets and can't have certain spices. "Whatever it takes to make someone happy here, we do it," he says.

The larger neighborhood

Although customers are important to a neighborhood restaurant, there is an equally vital element—the neighborhood itself. Involvement with the local community contributes to a strong business and a strong neighborhood.

Neighborhood involvement can take many forms. First, it can serve as a public relations tool—a way to build an establishment's image. Local fundraisers and charity events can do much to heighten a restaurant's reputation in a local area. The Wishing Well in St. Louis supports local churches through advertisements in their bulletins and works for fundraisers whenever possible. "We work long, hard hours here," says Molina, "but we help out whenever we can."

Hyde Street Bistro's Rainer shares that enthusiasm, but cautions that "if you do too much, you get stretched too far and do little good." His restaurant focuses on a few community commitments such as school programs and fundraisers for Mt. Zion Hospital. Anglers & Writers, in addition to advertising events at local schools and St. Luke's Church, is heavily involved with issues of interest to both customers and Mr. Bero himself, such as Trout Unlimited, an environmental group of fly fishermen in New York that work for water quality and conservation. Coy's Steakhouse recently supported the local Girl Scout cookie drive, sponsoring the top-sales scout in the local newspaper, hanging posters throughout the restaurant and serving Girl Scout cookies free for dessert.

Neighborhood involvement can do far more than just boost your name—it can advertise it without the high cost of an ad campaign. Since many neighborhood establishments have limited advertising budgets, using community activities as promotional events makes sound sense. "It's a great way to get our name into the community," says Trudy Moore of the many promotional items Coy's distributes at local events. Moore also believes strongly in working with other merchants for cross-promotional gain. "We're a very loyal community," she says, "and we work well together." Coy's recently participated in a bridal fair that featured local florists, photographers and dress shops, and it gave Coy's a chance to showcase its banquet facilities. Other forms of community support, such as buying ad space in church programs, nonprofit theater programs or school publications, can also be inexpensive and rewarding—as well as helpful. "Just small things to keep our name in front of the community and help out," says Joe's Bar & Grill's Wagner. Sponsoring local sports teams, as The Wishing Well does, is also a way to flash your name across a field.

Neighborhood establishments are involved in many activities for the sake of the neighborhood itself: to help it grow and develop, to help it stay the same or to make it again what it once was. Even though the bulk of The Wishing Well's regulars are part of a neighborhood long gone by, Molina works diligently to improve his North County neighborhood of today. As a director of the local Chamber of Commerce and a member of a local development commission, he keeps careful track of local trends and works to rehabilitate neighborhoods and businesses. "We are turning upwards again," Molina reports hopefully.

Hyde Street Bistro's Albert Rainer belongs to the Russian Hill Neighborhood Association to work for the betterment of his community. "I strongly believe in giving something back [to the neighborhood]," he says. "You owe something to your fellow citizens who support you."

Craig Bero contributes to the development of his neighborhood in a slightly different way: He concentrates on expanding the artistic life of the community. Anglers & Writers opens the floor to area musicians on Sunday nights for small concerts, and he occasionally showcases a small local theater company. "We never charge admission," he says. "These are community activities. We invite the regulars in."

A network of support

As Hyde Street Bistro's Albert Rainer says, the key to a successful neighborhood restaurant is support—mutual support. The door is always open; the atmosphere, relaxed. The staff is friendly and familiar; the food is "comforting" in both style and price. And restaurants that offer such neighborhood comforts get comfort in return—the comfort of knowing that the regulars will come back and that the neighborhood will see the restaurant through good times and bad. "People wonder how we're making it," says Bero, "with restaurants closing down all the time here. But I go in there every day and there are the people, the same people. We would be lost without the neighborhood. That's how we're making it."

Melanie Crosby is managing editor of ***Restaurants USA.***

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TOP-NOTCH

When it's time to renovate or repair your restaurant, the c

by Juli

Whether you are planning a new million-dollar restaurant or a $25,000 repair job, don't assume that luck will lead you to a good contractor for the job. Horror stories abound about fly-by-night contractors who come in, accept a deposit, and then don't come back for two months—if at all. And then there are contractors who take a year to do a job that should have been completed in three months.

Susan Welzien, president and owner of S.W. Wells Design Associates, a Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, firm that specializes in the design of restaurants, has learned by trial and error how to select a good contractor. "Most contractors are basically good, honest people," she says, "but when I was beginning in this business, I was ripped off by some contractors."

Hiring a dishonest contractor, or a contractor who is not qualified to do the job, may cost not only extra money, but extra time as well. To a restaurateur who must close the restaurant or limit seating while construction is going on, time equals money. When you need a contractor, you want someone who will do the job properly, in a timely manner and within your budget.

Finding your own

When it is time to begin the search for a contractor, some people open the yellow pages and call the firm with the most appealing ad. Those like Welzien who are experienced in using contractors are vehement in opposing that method. Instead, they say, begin the search by asking friends, relatives and neighbors for names of contractors they have used and would recommend. If you are employing an architect, designer or foodservice consultant, ask which contractors they have worked with and liked. The chamber of commerce and professional associations (including the local restaurant association) are other sources, although these sources will probably provide you with lists but no specific recommendations. Ask fellow restaurateurs, too, especially those who have recently had work done that is to your liking.

Qualities to look for

Now that you have gathered a list of names, you must do some research before inviting three to five of them to bid on your job. These are the standards you should use:

1. Look for someone established. "Don't go to a little shop that opened two months ago, even if you are offered a great deal, because at least half of those great deals fall through," advises Welzien. Of course, if your job is very small, perhaps you can afford to take a chance at those odds. You may end up with someone so eager to build a reputation that the crew will knock themselves out for you.

2. Look for a contractor who is licensed, bonded and insured. Not all counties or states require licenses, and those that do have different requirements for obtaining them. For example, some jurisdictions make applicants take a test on job skills and knowledge of local building codes.

Bonding is a kind of insurance. When a contractor advertises that he is bonded, it usually means that you will be protected if something goes wrong—for instance if one of the subcontractors steals something while working on your establishment.

3. Check references. The most important criterion for finding a contractor is a set of good references.

Ask your prospective contractors to provide a list of references with phone numbers of customers who have had work done similar in size and scope to what you want. Then call these people and ask them the following questions:

□ What sort of work did the contractor do for you?

□ Did the contractor guarantee the work and fulfill the guarantee?

□ Did the contractor follow your ideas and add to them?

□ What were the workers like, and how well were they supervised?

□ Did the contractor honor the bid price?

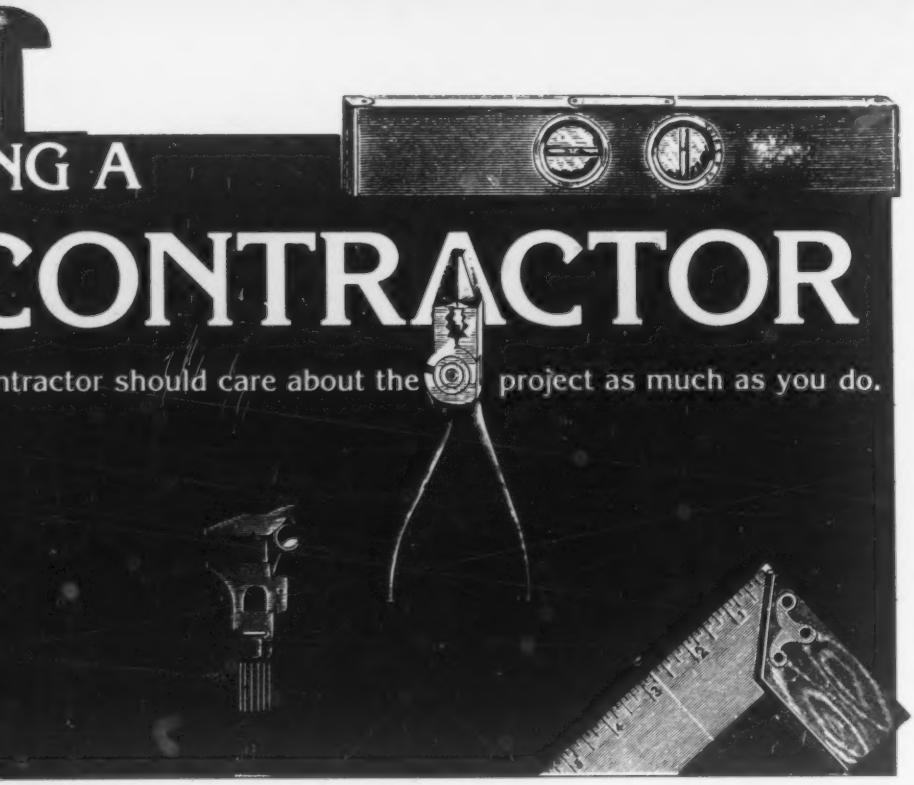
□ How was the overall quality of the work?

□ Was the work completed on schedule?

□ Did you get along with the contractor?

□ Would you hire the contractor again?

4. Choose a contractor familiar with restaurants and your area. Like doctors and lawyers, contractors specialize. A contractor who builds beautiful houses may not have the know-how to build a restaurant. If the contractor you choose has to struggle with unfamiliar technology and codes, chances are that the entire building process will take longer. When Pete Moffett, president of the



Fintel

company that owns four Manhattan Cooler restaurants in the Los Angeles area, built his first restaurant, he used a contractor who specialized in houses. "He had no clue what to do when the fire marshal and health inspector came by," Moffett says.

A knowledge of building codes is of special importance to anyone involved in building or remodeling a restaurant. Regulations govern everything from seating capacity to exit lights to exhaust systems. Because building codes are different in every area (and because they change often), it pays to hire someone familiar with building codes in your city, county or state. A contractor who undertakes work without checking codes could be in for some expensive surprises, as restaurateur Moffett learned the hard way. California codes require floor sinks to be in a certain place under any equipment that discharges (such as a dishwasher). A contractor working for Moffett put them in the wrong place, making it necessary to move them all after the job was supposedly finished.

5. Check the contractor's financial stability. A contractor who suddenly goes out of business could leave you with an unfinished project. It is hard to be sure that this will not happen, but a good reputation is one way of knowing whether a contractor is considered a good risk. You can also ask for bank and credit references.

Joe Spinelli, president and owner of Restaurant Construction Consultants in Rockville, Maryland, has often been called in by restaurant owners to get a project going again after a contractor went out of business during a project. He advises paying in installments to eliminate some of the risk. "That way you don't pay for more than you receive," says Spinelli. "If he goes out of business in the middle of the job and you've only paid him $2,000 on a $10,000 job, it's likely you received $2,000 worth of work from him before he left."

6. Check with your Better Business Bureau. The Better Business Bureau can tell you whether any complaints have been lodged against your candidates and how these conflicts were resolved. The Bureau won't be able to steer you to good contractors, but they can help you avoid bad ones.

7. Invite candidates to walk through the future work site with you. If you have had an architect or designer draw up plans, this is the time to go over them with your prospective contractor. The walk-through is the time to decide whether the contractor and you have a good rapport. You're going to be working closely with the contractor, and it's important that you communicate well.

Asking for bids

When the candidates know precisely what the job entails, it is time for them to submit bids and for you to make your choice.

Do not simply take the lowest bid without investigating thoroughly why the bid is low. Be skeptical. Ask questions about materials, costs and services. For instance, does the contractor have the number of workers it will take to do your job in the agreed amount of time? Welzien recently took the lowest bid for a flooring job and got substandard work. "You can't cut corners," she says. On the other hand, you may find out there are valid reasons for the lower bid. One remodeling contractor, for example, works out of his home and thus avoids the overhead of maintaining an office—a savings he passes on to his customers.

Get it in writing

You have found a good contractor. Now it is time to sign an agreement. Standard contract forms are available from printers, your contractor or the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

If you have any special concerns about the job, discuss them before signing the contract. Include the agreed-upon solutions in the contract. Do not sign until all specifications are written to your satisfaction and take nothing for granted—put it in writing.

Within the contract should be a "waiver of lien." When the waiver is signed by the major contractor and any subcontractors that are used, you will be protected against liens placed against your property by workers whom the general contractor has failed to pay. Waiver-of-lien forms are available at office supply stores.

Be sure to keep copies of all documents.

Homework pays off

Finding a top-notch contractor will take some time and work on your part. But careful research done before you sign a contract will greatly increase your chances of ending up with a job that you are happy with. ❑

Julie Fintel is a writer in Burke, Virginia.

REJUVENATE YOUR BUSINESS AT THE

1991 SHOW

The National Restaurant Association Show is an education, a time for rejuvenation and a celebration all in one. For anyone looking to improve business, make important industry contacts and stay on top of industry trends, the Show in Chicago is the place to be.

The heart of the Show is the exhibit floor, where ideas are shared and contacts are made.

THE 72ND NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION SHOW

The countdown to the 72nd annual National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show has begun. Restaurateurs, hoteliers and foodservice professionals of all types await May 18-22, 1991, and the unfolding of this major industry event at Chicago's McCormick Place.

And with good reason. The Show is the place to check the pulse of the hospitality industry by viewing the latest trends, hearing the latest management strategies and seeing the newest technological innovations at work. It's also a once-a-year chance to learn from the best—some of the foremost thinkers of our time, the most creative practitioners in the industry and the culinary masters who are lighting the way for foodservice in this country and abroad.

And the exhibit floor, the heart of the Show, holds 1,900 exhibitors offering thousands of new products, services and ideas that hold the answers to the problems, challenges and opportunities facing your business.

By day, there are riveting Theatre Series presentations, insightful Management Clinic programs and practical operations-oriented seminars. By night, there are glamorous stars, top-flight entertainment, romantic dancing, gourmet dining and the fabulous nightlife that is a Show tradition.

More than 100,000 attendees from 50 states and 70 foreign countries testify to the uniqueness of the National Restaurant Association Show. Truly in a class of its own, the annual Show is a personal and professional experience too good to miss. Here's what you can expect to see and experience at the 72nd annual Show.

BRING YOUR WALKING SHOES

Now in its 72nd year, the Show continues to amaze attendees with its enormity, diversity and creativity. Nowhere is the unique character of the Show more evident than in its 1,900 exhibitors, covering four huge floors and offering more products, equipment and services than any other show of its kind.

Dubbed the "Show of Shows," this is the place to glimpse trends before they hit the industry and the place to view the latest international products and services before they hit the U.S. market. More international exhibitors and visitors flock to the Show every year. This year's displays include exhibitions from Australia, Canada, Italy, Austria, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, Belgium, Hong Kong and New Zealand.

Always a spectacular display of industry talent and expertise, this year's Show floor promises to be more vital, comprehensive and worthwhile than ever. Be sure to catch these special segments on the lobby level of McCormick Place North:

□ *The Hotel Collection*. This new section is a must-see for hotel and motel operators or anyone interested in the lodging industry. Attendees will see many of the supplies needed to run an efficient and successful hotel or motel operation. Premier hotel suppliers will showcase items including beds, furniture, fixtures, uniforms and other special items unique to lodging operations.

□ *Illinois Avenue*. This special sec-

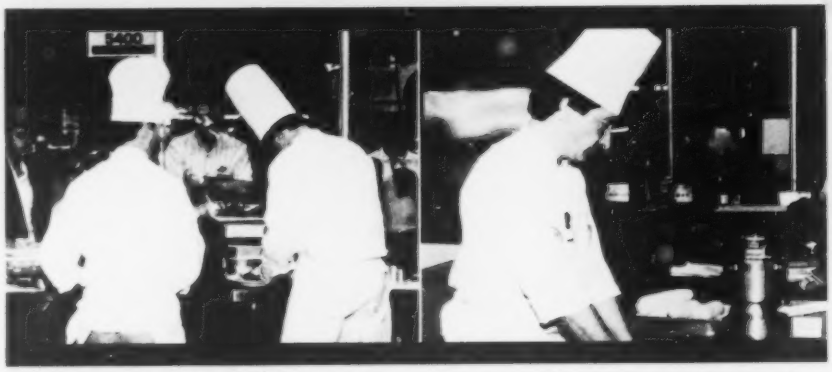
AMERICAN CULINARY CLASSIC

The American Culinary Classic is an experience too good to miss. Held only every four years, this world-class cold and hot-food competition is the largest and most prestigious culinary competition held in the United States. It may well be your only chance to see the brightest lights in international cooking from around the globe in heated competition.

Like the Olympics, this prestigious competition attracts the best. Chefs from 16 nations and four continents match wits and culinary wisdom. Official teams are expected from Austria, Canada, China, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.

See these masters at work Saturday through Tuesday, right on the exhibit floor of McCormick Place North. Four teams compete each day in the hot-food event, and four other teams compete in the cold (restaurant, buffet and dessert platters) competition. Specially designed glass-enclosed kitchens enable attendees to catch every nuance of the action.

Teams that place first, second and third in the hot and cold-food competitions and those that place first, second and third in the overall competition (a combination of hot and cold) will be awarded sterling silver medals.



The American Culinary Classic is the most prestigious culinary competition held in the United States.

Winners of the American Culinary Classic will be announced at a special awards ceremony in the main hall of the Field Museum of Natural History, located on the waterfront near McCormick Place, on Tuesday evening, May 21, at 6 p.m. This event of pomp and splendor includes a Parade of Nations, with chefs in whites carrying their national flags and with an orchestra playing songs of the winning countries.

The American Culinary Classic is held in conjunction with the American Culinary Federation (ACF) and the ACF-Chicago Chefs of Cuisine. It is recognized and endorsed by these organizations as well as by the World Association of Cooks Societies.

tion features the products and services of companies looking to break into or expand in the Chicagoland area. This is the best place to view the latest products and services taking the Windy City by storm.

□ *Wine and Spirits Way.* Discover the latest trends in the world of wine and learn about some of the best buys in the industry. Wine and Spirits Way features scores of the finest domestic and international wines and exhibitors promoting related aspects of the wine industry.

□ *The Seafood Center.* It's 10,000 square feet of piscatorial knowledge and product, and it's *the* place to discover the latest seafood trends. View the exotic and mundane. See crab, shrimp, lobster and other types of fish from seafood and fish suppliers from both coasts and around the country.

A ROYAL BEGINNING

Communication is what the National Restaurant Association Show is all about. And who better to kick off the Show than broadcast personality Larry King, a master of communication.

A popular television and radio host, Larry King has interviewed many of the most interesting people in the world: writers, politicians, athletes, film directors, historians and other notables, totaling more than 30,000 people. King is the host of *The Larry King Show,* a nightly radio show aired over 355 stations on the Mutual Broadcasting System, and of *Larry King Live,* Cable News Network's lively television program. He also pens a weekly column, "Larry King's People," for *USA Today* and is the author of four books: *Larry King, Tell It To The King, Mr. King You're Having A Heart Attack* and *Larry King Tell Me More.*

Joining special guest speaker Larry King at the podium for the opening-day program is National Restaurant Association President Michael E. Hurst, who caps off his noteworthy year in office during the National Restaurant Association Show. Hurst will highlight industry trends and critical issues, and will review the association's achievements of the past year, in particular covering the success of the "We're glad you're here!" program.

Don't miss this spectacular kickoff to the 72nd National Restaurant Association Show in the Arie Crown Theatre of McCormick Place on Sunday, May 19, at 2 p.m.

Broadcast personality Larry King (left) will bring his wit and energy to the opening-day program at the Arie Crown Theatre on Sunday, May 19. National Restaurant Association President Michael E. Hurst (right) will also address the opening-day crowd.

SHOW SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, MAY 18

9:00 a.m.
Registration and check-in for the pre-Show seminars, presented by the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association; McCormick Place North, lower level

9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
American Culinary Classic, McCormick Place North, exhibit floor, first of four days; continues May 19, 20 and 21

9:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Dealer/supplier/press preview of exposition, McCormick Place

10:00 a.m.–6:30 p.m.
Two-day, pre-Show seminar:
SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation, continues May 19

10:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Full-day, pre-Show seminars:
- ☐ Banquet Management
- ☐ Dining Room Management
- ☐ Food Cost Management
- ☐ Profitability
- ☐ SERVSAFE/Serving Alcohol Safely

10:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
Half-day, pre-Show seminars:
- ☐ Kitchen Management
- ☐ Legal Issues for Foodservice Operators
- ☐ Promoting Your Restaurant
- ☐ Service That Sells
- ☐ The Labor Issue
- ☐ Train-the-Trainer

11:30 a.m.
35th Annual Hennessy Awards Luncheon, Hyatt Regency Chicago (ticketed event)

6:30 p.m.
The Grand Banquet and Show/CLF Gala, Hyatt Regency Chicago, in honor of the National Restaurant Association's new chairman of the board and president, with the Four Tops and the Dick Judson Orchestra (ticketed event)

SUNDAY, MAY 19

8:00 a.m.
The start of "The Main Course" 10K race, Grant Park

9:00 a.m.
Registration and check-in for the pre-Show seminars presented by the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association, McCormick Place North, lower level

10:00 a.m.–6:30 p.m.
Two-day, pre-Show seminar:
SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation, last day

10:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Full-day, pre-Show seminars:
- ☐ Food Cost Management
- ☐ Kitchen Management
- ☐ Profitability
- ☐ SERVSAFE/AFS Train-the-Trainer
- ☐ Successful Buffet Management

10:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
Half-day, pre-Show seminars:
- ☐ Dining Room Management
- ☐ Promoting Your Restaurant
- ☐ Service That Sells
- ☐ Stress Management
- ☐ Theft Control

10:30 a.m.–6:00 p.m.
Exposition opens, McCormick Place

10:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
American Culinary Classic, McCormick Place North, exhibit floor, second of four days; continues May 20 and 21

10:30 a.m.–6:00 p.m.
21st Annual Culinary Arts Salon, McCormick Place East, Chicago Room, first of three days; continues May 20 and 21

11:30 a.m.
Award ceremonies for the 21st Annual Culinary Arts Salon, McCormick Place East, Jane Addams Room

2:00 p.m.
Opening-Day Ceremony at the Arie Crown Theater, McCormick Place East, with a welcoming address by National Restaurant Association Chairman of the Board and President Michael E. Hurst, who shares the podium with TV and radio host Larry King

9:00 p.m.–1:00 a.m.
Convention Capers I featuring Country vocalist and songwriter Eddy Raven and two of country music's fastest-rising stars, Daniele Alexander and Butch Baker. Hyatt Regency Chicago

MONDAY, MAY 20

9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Exposition opens, McCormick Place

9:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
American Culinary Classic, McCormick Place North exhibit floor, third of four days, continues May 21

9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
21st Annual Culinary Arts Salon, McCormick Place East, Chicago Room, second of three days, continues May 21

10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East:
- ☐ Feeding a Fitter American: The Restaurant's Role, with *New York Times* personal-health columnist and author Jane Brody, Theatre 1
- ☐ How to Maintain Turnover Below 50%, Do Double the Volume of Competitors, All Without Advertising, Theatre 2

Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
- ☐ Positioning for Success
- ☐ How to Save Water, Save Money and Build Up Sexual Awareness
- ☐ Healthy Cookin' That'll Put Some Spice in Your Life

Noon–1:30 p.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East:
□ Marketing International Travel, Theatre 1
□ Look Who's Wrecking Your Business Now, Theatre 2
□ A Meeting With Stan Freberg, Theatre 3
Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
□ Quality Training on $1.99 a Day

2:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East:
□ It's Not That Easy Being Green, Theatre 3
□ Don't Lose Your Restaurant by Accident, Theatre 2
□ Honest Work, Theatre 1
Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
□ Perspective Is Everything

9:00 p.m.–1:00 a.m.
Convention Capers II featuring blues legend Buddy Guy. Also stars the Booze Brothers Revue, Chicago Marriott

TUESDAY, MAY 21

9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
□ Salute to Excellence Forums. Industry professionals participate in two separate forums: one with 200 outstanding students and the other with leading educators in the hospitality field. Chicago Hilton & Towers

9:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Exposition opens, McCormick Place

9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
American Culinary Classic, McCormick Place North, exhibit floor, last day

9:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
21st Annual Culinary Arts Salon, McCormick Place East, Chicago Room, last day

10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East:
□ Achieving Breakthrough Service, Theatre 2
□ It's Not What Happens to You, It's What You Do About It, Theatre 3
□ The Psychology Factor, Theatre 1
Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
□ What's My Restaurant Got to Do With Saving the Earth?
□ Are You Listening?

Noon
The Illinois Tourism Luncheon honors former Illinois Governor James R. Thompson with the Illinois Tourism Award. With radio personality Wally Phillips as master of ceremonies and U.S. Secretary of Transportation Samuel K. Skinner as presenter of the award. Produced by the Illinois Restaurant Association in co-operation with the Hotel-Motel Association of Illinois, McCormick Place East, Lindheimer Room

Noon–1:30 p.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East:
□ Coming to Your Senses: What's New in Attracting Customers, Theatre 2
□ Improve Service and Quality, Reduce Cost, Build Customer Loyalty, Theatre 1

Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
□ Participative Employee Relations
□ Creative Recruiting: Beyond the Classifieds

2:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East
□ How to Make Stress Work for You, Theatre 1
□ Butkus! Actor and former pro football star Dick Butkus, Theatre 2

Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
□ Hotel Guest Service
□ PRIDE Means Never Having to Say You're Sorry

6:00 p.m.
American Culinary Classic Awards Ceremony, Field Museum of National History

7:00 p.m.
Salute to Excellence Reception and Dinner, Chicago Hilton & Towers (ticketed event)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22

9:30 a.m.–2:00 p.m.
Exposition opens, McCormick Place

THE "MAIN COURSE" RACE: 3,500 ATHLETES READY AND SET TO GO

It may not be the Olympics, but 3,500 runners at the Grant Park starting point will be poised to take off in the 11th Annual "Main Course" 10K race. The "Main Course" 10K race, held Sunday, May 19, at 8 a.m., is the largest race of its kind to hit the city of Chicago each year, and it's an undisputed off-the-floor favorite with exhibitors, attendees and Chicago residents.

Participants trek a course that runs beside the shores of Lake Michigan, around McCormick Place, through the Prairie Avenue historic district and down Michigan Avenue to the finish line at Arvey Field. The "Main Course" is open to attendees, exhibitors and the public.

America's most hospitable race, the "Main Course" 10K, will be run on Sunday, May 19.

Runners who cross the finish line are eligible for the "You-Don't-Have-to-Win-to-Win" array of prizes—random drawings which include roundtrip airfare for two to anywhere in the U.S., plus dinners and weekend packages at top Chicagoland restaurants and hotels. Additionally, all race participants receive colorful "Main Course" tee-shirts and running gear contributed by the race sponsors.

Sponsors include Pepsi-Cola, Coca-Cola USA, Tyson Foods, Miller Brewing Co., Van Den Bergh Foods, and Minute Maid Foodservice.

The fee to participate in the "Main Course" is $8.95. For race applications or additional information, contact Jim Brimm, Convention Headquarters, 150 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60601. Or call (312) 853-2533.

CONVENTION CAPERS NIGHTLIFE

After busy days on the Show floor, the Sunday and Monday evening hush that settles over the halls of McCormick Place at sundown will be but a pause as the National Restaurant Association Show moves uptown. Convention Capers, four hours of top-flight entertainment, continuous music and dancing, will beckon Show attendees to join in the legendary nightlife that is a tradition at the Show.

It's a popular way to unwind and to meet fellow attendees and exhibitors in a relaxed setting. And best of all, it's free with the Show admission badge.

Here's what the bright lights have in store.

Convention Capers I unfolds at the Hyatt Regency Chicago on Sunday, May 19, from 9 p.m. until 1 a.m. Attendees can hear country vocalist Eddy Raven, who placed his mark on country music in the '80s with hits like *I Got Mexico*. In addition to being a recording star, Raven has won 16 ASCAP awards for his songwriting, including awards for Jeannie C. Riley's *Good Morning Country Rain* and the smash hit by the Oak Ridge Boys, *Thank God For Kids*. Raven's music has a unique sound and feel, sure to please all Capers attendees.

Eddy Raven performs at Sunday, May 19th's Convention Capers.

Sharing the bill with Eddy Raven are Daniele Alexander and Butch Baker, two of country music's fastest-rising stars. Their first duet, *It Wasn't You, It Wasn't Me*, is currently moving up the charts.

Convention Capers II kicks off at the Chicago Marriott on Monday, May 20, from 9 p.m. until 1 a.m. Featured is Chicago blues legend Buddy Guy, an innovative guitarist and intense vocalist who won three awards at last year's National Blues Awards. Also starring the highly danceable Booze Brothers revue.

STELLAR SALUTE TO EXCELLENCE

On Tuesday evening, May 21, the eyes of the industry turn to the Fifth Annual Salute to Excellence Reception and Dinner at the Chicago Hilton and Towers. This invitation-only event, sponsored by the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association, honors industry leaders for their contributions to the advancement of professionalism through education. Special recognition is also given to the leaders of tomorrow—200 top culinary and HRI students.

The climax of festivities is naming the winner of the prestigious Thad A. Eure, Jr., Ambassador of Hospitality Award, which will be presented by foundation chairman Jack A. Laughery.

Master of Ceremonies for the evening is National Restaurant Association President Michael E. Hurst, owner of 15th Street Fisheries in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

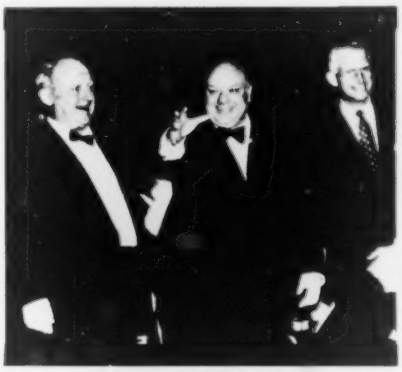
New inductees to the foundation's prestigious College of Diplomates honored at the banquet are Harris O. Machus, chairman emeritus of Harris O. Machus Enterprises, Inc., of Birmingham, Michigan; Anthony G. Mar-

THE FOUR TOPS AT THE GRAND BANQUET

Expect nothing but the tops from beginning to end at this year's Grand Banquet and Show/CLF Gala. Banquet attendees will enjoy gourmet dining, dancing and the music of the celebrated Four Tops, the "Grand Gentlemen of Rock 'n' Roll" and the group whose harmony helped define the Motown Sound.

The Grand Banquet and Show/CLF Gala is an event fit for royalty and an evening on the town not to be missed. Attendees can expect only the best as the National Restaurant Association and the foodservice industry honor the incoming association president at the Hyatt Regency Chicago on Saturday, May 18, at 6:30 p.m.

And who better to set the tone than the Four Tops, that fabulous '60s quartet that continues to delight audiences of many generations. Their list of top 10 hits, many of them gold records, includes legendary favorites like *Baby I Need Your Loving, I Can't Help Myself (Sugarpie, HoneyBunch)* and *It's the Same Old Song*. Rounding out the evening entertainment is the talented and popular Dick Judson Orchestra.



The association's 1990 officers, (left to right) President Michael Hurst, Vice President John Farquharson and Treasurer Richard Marriott, will celebrate the inauguration of the 1991 president at the annual Grand Banquet.

The Four Tops will sing their hits at the Grand Banquet and Show/CLF Gala.

It's an evening of magic from beginning to end. Tickets for the Grand Banquet and Show/CLF Gala are $125 per person. Contact Philip Kralovec at the National Restaurant Association office in Chicago at 150 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60601. Or call (312) 853-2525.

The educational foundation's "Salute to Excellence" Student and Faculty Forums take place Tuesday, May 21.

shall, Dean of the Florida International University School of Hospitality Management in North Miami, Florida; Jane Wallace, vice president and publisher of *Restaurants & Institutions* in Des Plaines, Illinois; and Donald G. Tober, chairman and chief executive officer of Sugar Foods Corporation in New York, New York.

Continuing its commitment to furthering excellence in the industry, the educational foundation again hosts its annual "Salute to Excellence" Student Forum during the day on Tuesday, May 21. This forum, which is co-sponsored by the Coca-Cola Company, maintains an important dialogue between the generations. Industry leaders and top students come together to exchange ideas and to discuss current issues and future challenges.

And for the first time ever, this year the foundation will also sponsor a Faculty Forum, similar in format to the Student Forum but involving faculty members from leading academic institutions. This important new forum will be produced in cooperation with the Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE).

The guest speaker at the Ambassador's Luncheon will be William H. Edwards, retired vice chairman of Hilton Hotels Corporation and the recipient of the 1990 Thad A. Eure, Jr., Ambassador of Hospitality Award.

EDUCATIONAL LINEUP

If the National Restaurant Association Show has a hallmark, it is ideas. And nowhere are ideas more plentiful than in the education programs that continue to draw attendees to the Show each year.

Whether you are a new show-goer or a veteran, the Theatre Series and the Management Clinic are an awesome display of knowledge, expertise and talent.

The Theatre Series allows attendees to gain insight, glean tips and gather techniques from some of the foremost personalities in the industry and the nation—writers, psychologists, management consultants, corporate strategists and others.

The Management Clinic helps operators to solve the problems and meet the challenges and opportunities facing their operations and the industry through dialogue with their peers.

Here are some of the special presentations on tap. All Theatre Series and Management Clinic sessions are held in the East Building of McCormick Place and are free to Show attendees.

Theatre Series

Monday and Tuesday, May 20–21

□ *Feeding a Fitter American: The Restaurant's Role.* Restaurants and good nutrition go hand in hand. Jane E. Brody, personal-health specialist of the *New York Times* and staff member for 25 years, discusses this important relationship in a special Theatre Series presentation.

Brody's widely read column appears in the *New York Times* every Thursday and in more than 100 other newspapers around the country. *Jane Brody's Nutrition Book* enjoyed 19 weeks on the best-seller list, and *Jane Brody's Good Food Book* is a complete guide to wholesome eating. Her latest book, *Jane Brody's Good Food Gourmet*, is a collection of more than 500 recipes and a menu guide for healthful entertaining.

□ *Marketing International Travel.* From the Persian Gulf crisis to the vast political changes sweeping the Eastern hemisphere, the international travel market seems to change daily. Richard C. Nelson of Hyatt Hotels & Resorts, and the 1991 president of the American Hotel and Motel Association, moderates a panel exploring the challenges and tremendous opportunities of the changing international travel market.

□ *Coming to Your Senses: What's New in Attracting Customers.* Learn about the latest international research on all five senses and 20 specific ways to attract and influence customers. Tips include use of localized lights and sounds, taste/touch connections, video vignettes and cross-promotions. Led by Kare Anderson, an Emmy-award-winning former journalist for the *Wall Street Journal*, UPI and *Le Monde*.

□ *Improve Service and Quality, Reduce Costs, Build Customer Loyalty.* Learn how quality improvement drives up productivity, increases employee morale and delights customers. Jim Clemmer outlines a strategic blueprint for high-powered organizational performance.

□ *Achieving Breakthrough Service.* Dr. Leonard A. Schlesinger can help your organization stand out from the pack. A member of the faculty of Harvard Business School since 1978 and former head of Au Bon Pain, Dr. Schlesinger captures what managers need to do to break through and become one of the elite few.

□ *Look Who's Wrecking Your Business Now.* Learn how to find, hire and promote the best people in order to increase productivity and profits. Joe Charbonneau, a top-rated speaker when he last spoke at the Show, explains how productivity is determined by the type of employee you hire.

□ *A Meeting With Stan Freberg.* Stan Freberg has many faces—humorist, satirist, director, producer, recording artist, composer, lyricist and author. Freberg is recognized as the man who gave advertising a sense of humor and, in the process, legitimized comedy as a creative approach to radio and television commercials. Freberg's commercials have copped 21 Clios, 18 International Broadcasting Awards, the grand prize at the Venice Film Festival and the New York Art Directors Club gold medal.

Educational sessions, featuring some of the brightest and most innovative thinkers in business today, are an integral part of the National Restaurant Association Show.

□ *It's Not What Happens To You, It's What You Do About It.* In 1971, a flaming motorcycle accident took W. Mitchell's fingers, his face and nearly his life. In 1975, while piloting his own airplane to an emergency landing, he was paralyzed and confined to a wheelchair while four passengers walked away. W. Mitchell turned adversity into opportunity and rebuilt his life. His inspirational story promises to help operators and other foodservice and lodging professionals.

□ *It's Not That Easy Being Green.* The environment is the catchword of the '90s, but instituting measures to help the environment can be difficult. Presenters including Bill Dover of Red Lobster of Canada, Bud Rusitzky of Serv-Rite Corporation in Rochester, New York, and Cathy Nelson of Rooney's Lobster House in Chicago will explain in detail environmental measures taken over the years and recent steps to deal with recycling, solid waste and the environment.

□ *Don't Lose Your Restaurant by Accident.* Case histories that outline some costly and avoidable accidents rival Ripley's *Believe It Or Not.* Amazing stories include the waiter's tray case ($4 million), the missing chair screw ($2.5 million) and the shot customer ($1.1 million). Learn accident-prevention practices and gain an understanding of liability law. Presented by Dr. Tony Marshall, Dean of the School of Hospitality Management at Florida International University.

□ *How to Maintain Turnover Below 50%, Do Double the Volume of Competitors, All Without Advertising.* Keith Dunn of the successful McGuffey's Restaurants proves that even the seemingly impossible can be accomplished. Dunn outlines an employee motivation system that reduces turnover, a service system that conditions a culture of "the answer is yes," and a method that allows personal name recognition of 30–50% of their 30,000 guests per week.

□ *Honest Work.* Learn how to make your job and the work of your employees more meaningful. Joanne Ciulla, professor at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and author of *Honest Work*, discusses the meanings and values associated with work in America and stresses the importance of business ethics to our society and to the fulfillment of personal success.

□ *How to Make Stress Work for You.* Learn 10 tools for effectively handling stress at work from Peter G. Hanson, M.D., a world-renowned lecturer, family doctor, daily radio program host and author of hundreds of articles and two highly acclaimed books. His international best-seller, *The Joy of Stress*, taught millions that stress is not the killer we assumed. Correctly managed, stress can be the missing key to excellence.

□ *The Psychology Factor.* Back by popular demand, Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute, explores the psychological significance of colors. Learn how this knowledge can help you conceptualize, design and revitalize your restaurant or hotel furnishings, tableware or menu.

□ *Butkus!* Former pro football star and native Chicago South Sider Dick Butkus will add his humor and insight to the Theatre Series as he discusses his success as both athlete and actor.

Management Clinic

Monday through Wednesday, May 20–22

□ *What's My Restaurant Got to Do With Saving the Earth?* Learn ways to adjust to the new realities of an environmentally conscious marketplace, complete with how to get started and how to work with vendors to bring them in line. With Gil Friend, a specialist in ecosystem management and consultant to the best-selling book *50 Simple Things You Can Do to Save the Earth.*

□ *Positioning for Success.* Positioning is the key to shaping customer perceptions. Whether your business is a one-unit operation or a chain, foodservice consultant Linda Tobey provides a way to maximize your marketing efforts in this practical, example-filled session.

□ *Are You Listening?* Correct listening is central to working with people. Dr. Marvin Glock, professor emeritus at Cornell University and one of the early researchers, writers and teachers on listening skills, teaches attendees to communicate more effectively, avoid undesired responses and increase both self-confidence and confidence in others.

□ *Creative Recruiting: Beyond the Classifieds.* Attending this seminar may forever change the way you approach recruitment. Carolyn B. Thompson teaches you to view everyone as a "hot prospect" for employment. Discover exciting ideas on where to find potential employees and how to make them want to work with you and your company.

□ *Hotel Guest Service.* This practical how-to shop talk covers the intricacies of a complete hotel guest service program. The presenters, management representatives from a variety of hotel departments (concierge, QA, front office), explore the challenge of providing quality service on an hour-to-hour basis.

□ *Healthy Cookin' That'll Put Some Spice in Your Life.* Learn to create attractive, flavorful, nutritious menu se-

Jane Brody **Richard Nelson** **Leatrice Eiseman** **Joe Charbonneau**

lections, especially from favorite less-healthful recipes. With Dr. Sandy Kapoor of the Center for Hospitality Management at Cal Poly Pomona.

□ *How to Save Water, Save Money and Build Up Sexual Awareness.* Gain practical, operations-oriented information on proper conservation. Discover how community relations and recycling can improve sales and save real dollars. With Mike Amos of Applebee's in Arizona.

□ *Perspective Is Everything.* Dr. Ray Goodman of the Department of Hotel Administration at the University of New Hampshire contrasts service expectations from a guest's and an employee's point of view. Learn why differences occur and how managers and owners can train employees to deliver service the way guests, not employees, want it.

□ *Participative Employee Relations.* Carole Kohn of the Loews Anatole Hotel in Dallas describes the Anatole's innovative "Township" program. It involves all employees in the development, planning, budgeting and implementation of all employee relations programs. This presentation proves the value of concepts like recognition, communication, employee pride and image, involvement and awareness.

□ *Quality Training on $1.99 a Day.* Hard to believe, but true. This lively clinic discusses how to develop cost-effective, high-impact training and support materials. Many ideas are applicable to both management and hourly employee training. And each item discussed has an average cost per day of $1.99 or less! With Dennis Minchella of Morrison's Inc.

□ *PRIDE Means Never Having to Say You're Sorry.* PRIDE stands for Personal Responsibility In Delivering Excellence. William Wicker of Bruegger's Bagel Bakery outlines a successful contest involving mystery shoppers and employee training.

PRE-SHOW SEMINARS: ANOTHER SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

It takes a lot more than luck to make it in today's market. Operational expertise, strong professional management skills and keen industry insight can make or break your operation in the 1990s. And the place to gain all this and more is the pre-Show seminar lineup presented by the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association.

Truly too good to pass up, pre-Show seminars cover 16 of the hottest topics, trends and techniques in the industry. Attending any one of these could be the experience that sends you home inspired and revolutionizes your operation. Seminars are offered Saturday, May 18, and Sunday, May 19, preceeding the opening of the Show. All seminars begin at 10 a.m. and are held on the lower level of McCormick Place North, adjacent to the complimentary shuttle bus drop-off site.

Seminar registration fees are separate from the cost of general admission to the Show and include course materials and a certificate of completion from the educational foundation. In addition, the seminars are approved for continuing-education credits by many industry associations.

Registration fees for pre-Show seminars vary. The 2-day SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation Seminar is $200 for one person and $175 per person for multiple attendees. Full-day course registration is $150 for one person and $125 for multiple attendees. Half-day seminars run $75 for one attendee and $65 per person for multiple attendees.

The pre-Show seminar lineup for the 72nd National Restaurant Association Show includes:

□ *SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation Certification.* Don't miss this opportunity to attend the nation's leading sanitation training and certification program presented in a two-day workshop. Learn valuable food safety practices in preparation for the SERVSAFE/AFS certification exam. Individuals passing the exam receive a certificate of completion. (Certification requirements vary by jurisdiction.) Deadline for registration is May 1.

□ *Banquet Management.* Learn the key ingredients in creating and maintaining a profitable banquet program. Topics include rating banquet profitability, creating exciting menus and developing personnel.

□ *Dining Room Management.* Management and staff benefit from basic management skills and a program to produce an efficient front-of-the-house staff. Topics covered include customer relations, employee motivation and personnel administration.

□ *Food Cost Management.* Learn to reduce food costs by at least 1 percent using an analytical, problem-solving approach to identify actual and ideal food use. Forms and management tools needed to implement this valuable cost-control program are provided.

□ *Kitchen Management.* Owners, managers and staff discover the key ingredients for running an efficient back of the house. Topics include streamlining purchasing, reducing food cost, improving food preparation and increasing quality.

□ *The Labor Issue.* From creating an active recruitment plan and a high-quality training program to successfully retaining employees, participants learn ways to beat the labor crunch.

□ *Profitability.* A blueprint for improving profits at the unit level. Learn a variety of operating systems, management techniques and cost-control tips that can be implemented in any full-service operation.

□ *Promoting Your Restaurant.* Learn to create an effective promotional plan based on a strong community marketing campaign. Uncover ways to increase sales using direct mail, promotions, publicity and by tapping into local resources.

□ *Successful Buffet Management.* A review of the basics of buffet service with an emphasis on creative menus, decor, preparation and presentation, cost control and staff motivation. Applicable to any size operation.

□ *Theft Control.* Management behavior and procedures are the influencing factors in controlling employee and customer theft. Attendees learn to identify methods of theft and to control theft through operational procedures and increased security.

Special additions to the pre-Show seminar lineup this year:

□ *Legal Issues for Foodservice Operators.* Gain insight into the legal problems of the industry. Topics include handling negligence cases, employee discrimination, breach of contract, government antitrust laws and health violations.

□ *SERVSAFE/Serving Alcohol Safely.* The new SERVSAFE alcohol safety program promotes responsible alcohol service training for managers and servers. This manager-training

seminar teaches attendees the laws concerning service to minors and intoxicated customers. Learn to recognize intoxicated customers and levels of intoxication, to develop written guidelines for servers, and to implement a procedure for providing intoxicated customers with alternatives.

□ *SERVSAFE/Train-the-Trainer.* Individuals who received the Foundation's SERVSAFE/AFS certification can learn to conduct their own food-safety training program. This seminar introduces attendees to all the new *SERVSAFE/Serving Safe Food* training materials. Attendees learn presentation skills to help students retain information and tips on motivating student participation.

□ *Service That Sells.* 50 guaranteed ways to improve service, increase sales and reduce turnover. Transforming "order-takers" into service-oriented salespeople is the key to increasing sales and customer satisfaction. Discover important selling techniques, tips for motivating employees and techniques for improving customer relations.

□ *Stress Management.* Burnout, the number-one cause of turnover among foodservice management, is often reflected in the service received by customers. Learn operational and personal tips for preventing and recognizing on-the-job burnout.

□ *Train-the-Trainer.* Establishing comprehensive training programs means reduced employee and management turnover, improved customer service and increased sales. This seminar teaches owners and managers to identify their organization's training needs and implement a training program that will benefit the entire staff.

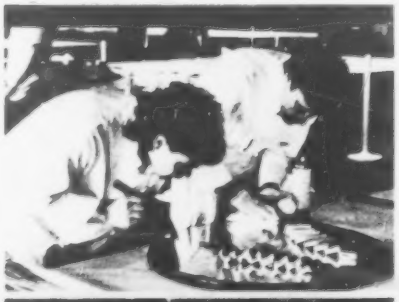
For further information on pre-Show seminars write to the Educational Foundation Customer Service Department, 250 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60606, or call (800) 765-2122.

NOTE: Advance registration is recommended to ensure availability of space and training materials.

CULINARY ARTS SALON

Now 21 years old and still the leading showcase for the latest cold-food culinary presentations, the Culinary Arts Salon is the largest cold-food display of its kind, covering 4,000 square feet of display table space.

Attendees see fanciful marzipan creations, exquisite wedding cakes, spun-sugar sculptures and cold-food displays that can only be considered works of art—all set off to perfection in the beautiful Chicago Room of McCormick Place East, Sunday, May 19, through Tuesday, May 21.



Approximately 200 chefs will fill 4,000 square feet of table space with their culinary creations at the 21st annual Culinary Arts Salon.

Highlights of this year's Salon include an intrasquad competition among the regional teams of the 1992 Culinary Team USA and a special "Works in Marzipan" category in which chefs are judged in four categories: out-of-town professionals, out-of-town student apprentices, best of Chicago professionals and best of Chicago student apprentices.

Eminent chefs and foodservice professionals serve as judges, evaluating entries and naming winners in the following categories: Grand Prize, Pastry Display; Best of Show; Most Original Piece of Show; Judges' Special Award and Best Entry from a Junior Culinarian. Winners will be announced at award ceremonies at McCormick Place East on Sunday, May 19.

The annual National Restaurant Association Culinary Arts Salon is recognized and endorsed by the American Culinary Federation and the ACF-Chicago Chefs of Cuisine.

SECRETARY OF AIR FORCE TO SPEAK AT HENNESSY AWARDS LUNCHEON

Expect pomp and circumstance and an impressive display of leaders from the Air Force and foodservice at the 35th Annual Hennessy Awards Luncheon, the hospitality industry's annual tribute to military foodservice. Dr. Donald B. Rice, the Secretary of the Air Force, will be the luncheon guest speaker at the Hyatt Regency Chicago on Saturday, May 18, at 11:30 p.m.

Before accepting his appointment by President Bush as the Secretary of the Air Force, Dr. Rice was the president and chief executive officer of The RAND Corp., an independent, nonprofit, public-service institution which conducts research and analysis on problems of national security and domestic affairs and sponsors doctoral degree programs in several fields of public policy.

Earlier positions held by Rice include assistant director in the Office of Management & Budget, deputy assistant secretary of defense for resource analysis and director of cost analysis in the office of the secretary of defense.

The annual Hennessy Award is bestowed in honor of John (Lawrence) Hennessy, a civilian long recognized for his advancement of military foodservice.

Each year a panel of distinguished foodservice and military executives single out Air Force bases for excellence in the management, preparation and service of food to military personnel. The competition is divided into two main categories, single unit and multiple unit, with special award categories for the Air Force Reserves and the Air National Guard.

Tickets for the Hennessy Awards Luncheon are $40 and may be purchased through Mary Garnett at the National Restaurant Association, 1200 17th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. Or call (202) 331-5966.

#116

"But on the other hand . . ."

On a recent cross-country flight, my seatmate and I struck up a conversation. He told me he was the chief economist for one of the nation's prestigious think tanks. We chatted for a while, but then I reclined my seat and my eyes got heavy and *zzzzz*. All of a sudden I found myself talking with the economist again.

Me: Where do you think the economy is headed?

Economist: It may go up, but on the other hand, it could go down. It's a very interesting time. There's been no other time like it.

Me: Do you think the recession we're in will be long and deep, or short and shallow?

Economist: There are a lot of signals that point to a mild recession. Companies are leaner and more productive thanks to downsizing, or as some people term it, "rightsizing." But on the other hand, it could be severe, as the unemployment rate is somewhat high and some financial institutions are shaky, which affects credit availability.

Me: Does the unsettled international scene influence our economy very much?

Economist: That's a very good question. Very good question. Exports are affected negatively when the international community is in disarray, and it can cause upward pressure on oil prices. On the other hand, people at home still need the staples of food, utilities, pharmaceuticals and so forth.

Me: Are you saying that crises and turmoil bring opportunities in the stock market?

Economist: In any economic, political and social climate there are always stocks that are undervalued and those that are overvalued. But on the other hand, the stock market is all psychological, not numerical, as far as I'm concerned.

Me: What do you mean it's all psychological?

Economist: I'm speaking in general terms, of course, but the irony of the market is that when people think we are in a recession and that times are bad, they act that way, and the market goes down. But on the other hand, when people think that there is light at the end of the tunnel and that the down cycle is turning around, the stock market goes up. I got this theory third-hand, so to speak, from a friend of a friend. Actually, he's a barber who does the hair of some noted psychologists.

Me: Is inflation a problem in the immediate future?

Economist: Well, it shouldn't be, but on the other hand, it could be. Interest rates are trending down, which is good for borrowers since that reduces the cost of money, which helps construction and rebuilding of inventories. But on the other hand, a lot of our national debt, which is now $3.3 trillion, is financed by overseas investors such as the Japanese and the Germans. Lower interest rates are not attractive to them, so they may not buy our government securities unless interest rates go up. It's all political as far as I'm concerned.

Me: What do you mean it's all political? I thought you said it was all psychological?

Economist: I'm speaking in general terms, of course, but it's the stock market that's psychological. The vagaries of interest rates are political, not numerical, as far as I'm concerned.

Me: What do you mean by that?

Economist: Well, the Federal Reserve Board is an independent body, technically, and they control the central bank function, supposedly immune from political party pressure. But on the other hand, those governors live in the real world and read and listen to the news reports just as you and I do. In business and economic circles there is always as much interest in the appointment of a new governor to the Federal Reserve Board as there is interest in the general population when a new Supreme Court justice is appointed.

Me: What about the national debt that we have? You said it was $3.3 trillion. With a U.S. population of 250 million, that's a debt load of more than $13,000 for every man, woman and child in the country. That's staggering!

Economist: Well, that is a 13-digit number, and I can see why you and others are concerned. Somebody is going to have to pay that someday. And interest on that debt is the fastest-growing component of the federal budget, and that's bad. But on the other hand, we have a $6 trillion economy, and the addition to the national debt each year (which is each year's federal deficit) is a shrinking percentage of each year's gross national product. That's good.

Me: Using a metaphor, I think you've just told me we're sinking more slowly, but we're still sinking.

Economist: I'm speaking in general terms, of course, but on the other hand, you do seem to have grasped the point.

Me: Well, what about tax rates. What is the outlook there?

Economist: Taxes will do one of two things. They will either go up or they will go down. But on the other hand, they could stay the same. I'm speaking in general terms, of course. It could be good if higher taxes were earmarked for debt reduction rather than increased spending, but on the other hand, it would be bad because increased taxes could draw money out of the economy that otherwise would be spent by consumers and businesses, which in turn would stimulate the economy. It's all philosophical, not numerical, as far as I'm concerned.

Me: What do you mean it's philosophical? You say the stock market is psychological, that interest-rate decisions are political, and now you say taxes are philosophical. You are an economist. Isn't anything economical?

Economist: Oh, it's all economical, so to speak. Economics threads through all those things and many more as well. I'm speaking in general terms, of course.

Me: Who are you going to speak to at your destination?

Economist: I've been asked to address the annual meeting of the Procrastinators' Clubs of America. They're the people who make a virtue out of putting things off.

The crackle of the flight attendant's landing announcement startled me, and I realized I had been dreaming. This conversation never really took place. I did note, however, that my economist seatmate was talking to the passenger across the aisle. He was saying, "I'm speaking in general terms, of course, but on the other hand . . ."

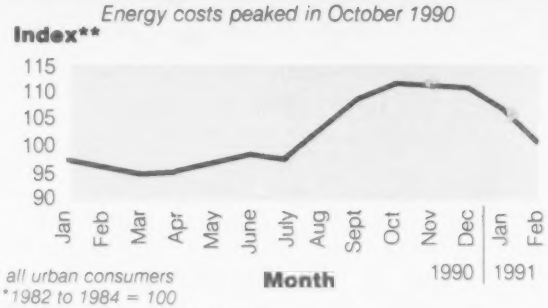
Fisher's Law #116: There is a good reason why economics is known as the "dismal science." What does that make economists?

Restaurateurs are conserving energy

An association survey of tableservice operators reveals that restaurateurs are adopting a variety of measures to conserve energy at their establishments. According to the Consumer Price Index, energy costs advanced a hefty 15.1 percent in 1990, compared with an overall inflation rate of 5.4 percent.

Consumer Price Index (CPI)* for energy
1990 to early 1991

Energy costs peaked in October 1990



* all urban consumers
**1982 to 1984 = 100
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

A recent National Restaurant Association tableservice-operator survey shows that restaurateurs are taking steps to conserve energy. According to survey results, more than four in 10 tableservice operators reported that they have modified lighting fixtures for energy-conservation purposes. In addition, about 25 percent reported that they have installed heat-recovery equipment on refrigeration and air conditioners. As energy and environmental issues continue to grow in importance, tableservice restaurateurs have acted to conserve energy and also to preserve the environment. Nearly one-third of tableservice respondents report that they have sponsored community conservation activities.

1990 energy costs jump

Driven by the crisis in the Persian Gulf, energy costs in 1990 as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) jumped more than 15 percent. In comparison, energy costs advanced a lower 5.6 percent in 1989.

Analysis of the CPI energy index in 1990 shows that energy costs on a monthly basis actually declined through the first quarter of 1990. However, the start of the Persian Gulf crisis in August 1990 had an immediate and dramatic effect on energy prices—especially gasoline. Between July and October 1990, energy costs advanced almost 13 percent, with gasoline prices up by more than 15 percent during the same period. Since October 1990, energy and gasoline costs have edged downward. Still, gasoline costs in January 1991 were up 19 percent compared with a year earlier.

Restaurant utility costs escalating

The association's *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990* confirms the importance that utility and energy costs play within restaurant operating expenses. For full-menu tableservice operators, median utility expenses in 1989 were $174 per seat, or 3.2 percent of total sales. At limited-menu, no tableservice (fast food) operations, median utility expenses were $194 per seat, or 3.1 percent of total sales.

Considering that the median pretax income as a ratio to total sales for full-menu tableservice establishments was 3.2 percent in 1989, monitoring and controlling utility expenditures can help improve an operator's bottom-line results. Utility expenses were the fifth-highest controllable expense at full-menu tableservice establishments in 1989—higher than advertising and promotion costs, repair and maintenance expenditures, and music and entertainment expenses.

A special analysis of the 1990 industry operations survey data indicates that even before the August 1990 energy price shock,

Percent of tableservice restaurants taking specific conservation steps by dinner check size per person

More than two out of five operators have modified their lighting fixtures to conserve energy

	Dinner check size per person			
Action taken	**Less than $8**	**$8 to $14.99**	**$15 to $24.99**	**$25 or more**
Modified lighting fixtures	46%	44%	40%	46%
Installed heat-recovery equipment on refrigeration and air conditioners	31	22	21	23
Installed low-water warewashers and/or toilet fixtures	35	34	46	32
Served water to patrons only if asked	51	44	35	28
Sponsored community conservation activities	29	28	29	30

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Tableservice Trends: 1991*

Changes in Consumer Price Index (CPI)* by selected expenditure category 1989–1990

Gasoline costs jumped more than 14 percent in 1990

Category	Percent change 1989–1990
Gasoline	14.1%
Medical care	9.0
Food at home	6.5
Transportation	5.6
All items	**5.4**
Housing	4.8
Food away from home	4.7
Entertainment	4.7
Apparel	4.6

** all urban consumers*

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Full-menu tableservice controllable expenses 1990

Utility costs are a large component of a restaurant's controllable expenses

Controllable expense	Amount per seat*
Payroll	$1,544
Direct operating expenses	297
Employee benefits	273
Administrative and general	185
Utilities	**174**
Advertising and promotion	104
Repairs and maintenance	95
Music and entertainment	16

** median values*

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990*

operators' utility costs were escalating. On the basis of respondent establishments that reported operating data for two consecutive years, full-menu tableservice restaurants experienced a 6 percent advance in utility costs between 1988 and 1989. This advance was larger than that experienced for payroll expenses.

Supply overview

According to the Energy Information Administration (EIA), crude oil still accounts for one-fourth of our nation's energy production, and U.S. reliance on foreign oil imports has increased to compensate for declining domestic crude-oil production. Crude-oil imports from the Persian Gulf area have risen dramatically. In 1985, U.S. net imports from the Persian Gulf were 304,000 barrels per day. By comparison, in early 1990, U.S. net imports from the Persian Gulf exceeded 2 million barrels a day. Meanwhile, U.S. crude-oil production has declined from 9 million barrels per day in 1985 to around 7 million barrels per day in 1990.

Although crude oil plays an important role in meeting U.S. energy needs, its use varies by industries. For the United States, oil use is concentrated in the transportation sector. As a result of the Persian Gulf crisis, 1990 motor oil prices (especially gasoline) escalated rapidly. Natural gas prices were less affected.

In addition, a fundamental structural change in our nation's energy production has occurred over the past 15 years. According to EIA, coal (primarily used to generate electricity) accounted for almost one-third (32 percent) of U.S. energy production in 1989. Natural gas ranked a close second (30 percent), followed by crude oil (24 percent). By comparison, in 1975, natural gas ranked first (37 percent), followed by crude oil (30 percent) and coal (25 percent).

What this means to restaurant operators is that their total energy and utility costs are dependent upon the mix of the various energy commodities that their restaurant uses. Consequently, many restaurant operators will probably continue and expand their energy conservation efforts and more closely examine their operations' primary sources of energy supply.

—Hudson Riehle

A review of employee turnover rates

The National Restaurant Association has compiled data on employee turnover rates from its annual restaurant industry operations survey. For the first time, turnover data is available for both salaried and hourly employees.

According to the association's 1990 industry operations survey, limited-menu, no tableservice (fast food) operators reported the highest employee turnover rate* in 1989: 140 percent. In comparison, cafeterias experienced the lowest employee turnover rate at 71 percent.

Full-menu tableservice operators reported an annual employee turnover rate of 109 percent, while limited-menu tableservice establishments posted a slightly higher employee turnover rate of 112 percent.

**derived from the number of W-2s distributed and the number of employees working during a typical week*

Higher turnover for hourly workers

For the first time, the association's annual operations survey provides employee-turnover data for both salaried and hourly employees. For all restaurant categories surveyed (full-menu tableservice, limited-menu tableservice, fast food and cafeterias), the annual turnover rate for hourly employees was noticeably higher than for salaried em-

ployees. With the exception of fast food establishments, the annual turnover rate for hourly workers was more than double that for salaried individuals.

In 1989, full-menu tableservice operators reported an annual salaried turnover rate of 50 percent, compared with 119 percent for hourly employees. Cafeterias posted an annual salaried turnover rate of 44 percent, versus 90 percent for hourly employees. Fast food survey participants reported the highest salaried turnover rate in 1989: 100 percent.

Other highlights

□ Turnover was generally lower when the ratio of part-time to full-time employees was lower. For example, at full-menu tableservice establishments, part-time employees accounted for 59 percent of all workers. Among limited-menu, no tableservice survey participants, part-time workers accounted for a larger 71 percent of the workforce. Compared with the 1988 data, the median number of part-time workers remained stable at full-menu tableservice establishments in 1989 while declining at limited-menu, no tableservice operations.

□ Despite slight changes in the operations survey that make prior-year turnover rates not strictly comparable, it appears that annual employee turnover rates declined somewhat between 1988 and 1989. For example, in 1988 full-menu tableservice operators reported an annual employee turnover rate of 120 percent compared with a slightly lower 109 percent for 1989. Fast food establishments posted an annual employee turnover rate of 180 percent in 1988 versus a lower 140 percent for 1989.

□ Among full-menu tableservice survey participants, turnover rates varied substantially by average check size per person. In general, at establishments with larger average checks, the turnover rate for salaried employees was higher when compared with the hourly-employee turnover rate. The opposite was true at establishments with smaller average checks. For instance, operations with an average check of less than $5 reported an annual salaried-employee turnover rate of 67 percent, compared with 136 percent for hourly employees. In comparison, full-menu tableservice establishments with an average check of $15 or more reported a salaried-employee turnover rate of 112 percent, versus 50 percent for hourly employees.

Annual employee turnover rates,* 1989

Turnover among salaried employees was lower than among hourly workers

Type of establishment	All employees	Salaried employees	Hourly employees
□ Full-menu tableservice	109%	50%	119%
Sales volume			
Less than $500,000	94	50	100
$500,000 to $999,999	130	67	134
$1,000,000 to $1,999,999	121	50	133
$2,000,000 or more	99	36	104
Profit versus loss			
Restaurants reporting net profit	118	50	128
Restaurants reporting net loss	131	67	139
□ Limited-menu, no tableservice	140	100	146
Sales volume			
Less than $200,000	120	100	130
$200,000 to $399,999	155	100	163
$400,000 to $599,999	137	50	147
$600,000 or more	171	67	181
Profit versus loss			
Restaurants reporting net profit	163	100	167
Restaurants reporting net loss	160	**	175

* *median values*
** *insufficient data*

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990*

Number of full and part-time employees by type of establishment and sales volume,* 1989

Type of establishment	Full-time employees	Part-time employees (20 to 35 hrs.)**	Part-time employees (less than 20 hrs.)**
□ Full-menu tableservice	14	12	8
Sales volume			
Less than $500,000	9	8	6
$500,000 to $999,999	12	10	7
$1,000,000 to $1,999,999	22	20	11
$2,000,000 or more	47	30	18
□ Limited-menu, no tableservice	5	6	6
Sales volume			
Less than $200,000	4	5	5
$200,000 to $399,999	4	5	5
$400,000 to $599,999	6	6	5
$600,000 or more	7	13	10

* *median values*
** *per week*

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990*

To order the report

The *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990* (CS955) presents annual employee-turnover statistics for full-menu tableservice operations, fast food, limited-menu tableservice operations and cafeterias. Data is available by menu theme, location, average check size, profit, sales volume, affiliation and type of establishment. The report also contains a wealth of other useful operating and financial data. Copies are available to association members for $39 and to nonmembers for $72. This includes shipping and handling charges (overseas orders require a 20 percent surcharge). All orders must be prepaid.

You may order by sending a check or money order to the National Restaurant Association Publications Department, 1200 17th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. For credit-card orders, call the association's information service and library between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Eastern Time) at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960.

□ Among fast food operators, establishments with annual sales of $600,000 or more reported the highest turnover rate for hourly employees: 181 percent. Establishments with annual sales of less than $200,000 posted an hourly-employee turnover rate of 130 percent.

□ For full-menu tableservice establishments, operations located in an office building posted the highest employee turnover rate (141 percent), followed by locations in a shopping center or mall (122 percent).

—*Hudson Riehle*

Update on shopping-center restaurants

Restaurants have become an integral part of many shopping centers, and shopping-center restaurants average higher profits, sales and table turns than sole-occupant restaurants.

Although shopping centers are hardly a novelty, it appears that customers' fascination with them has not faded. According to the National Research Bureau, the number of shopping centers in the United States grew 14.3 percent between 1986 and 1988, from 28,496 to 32,563. Over the same period, retail sales at these centers advanced 15.2 percent, from $556.5 billion in 1986 to $641.1 billion in 1988. (By comparison, total retail sales from all outlets grew by a somewhat lower 13.8 percent between 1986 and 1988.)

But with this growth in the number of centers, there is increased competition to lure shoppers. As a result, many centers are placing an emphasis on foodservice as a marketing tool. Not only does having restaurants in the shopping center mean that shoppers can satisfy their hunger pangs without leaving the premises, but restaurants are also lucrative tenants.

Restaurants convert visits to sales

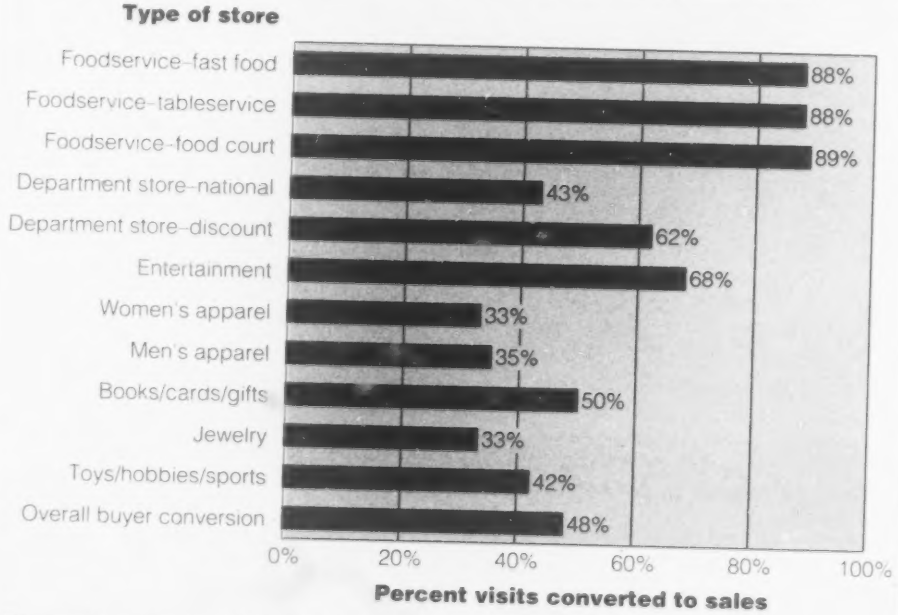
The buyer conversion rate measures the percentage of visits that are converted to sales. According to Stillerman Jones & Company's *National Benchmarks, 1991*,* foodservice establishments had the highest buyer conversion rates of any shopping-center tenants. Needless to say, people don't browse at a restaurant or food court the way they do in a department store. Roughly nine out of 10 visits to a foodservice establishment within a shopping center in 1990 ended in a sale.

Among non-foodservice outlets, drug/variety stores (70 percent conversion

* *The 1991 Stillerman Jones & Co. publication* National Benchmarks *represents a summary of consumer characteristics and shopping habits of more than 35,400 shopper-intercept surveys conducted at Stillerman Jones & Co.'s client shopping centers nationwide. Benchmark data are updated on an annual basis and reflect a rolling average.*

Buyer conversion rates at shopping center stores in 1990

Foodservice outlets fair better than other retailers in converting visits to sales



Source: Stillerman Jones & Co., *National Benchmarks, 1991*

Location matters

All locations are not created equal when it comes to shopping-center restaurants. Data from the Urban Land Institute's *Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers, 1990* indicates that both sales and rent per square foot of gross leasable area (GLA) vary greatly for fast food/carryout restaurants in super-regional shopping centers.*

For example, although rents were highest in center court locations ($36.20 per square foot), sales were highest for fast food places located in side-mall locations ($368.67 per square foot). And although both sales ($204.78 per square foot) and rents ($16.72 per square foot) were lowest for fast food restaurants located in anchor courts, rent as a percentage of sales was also the lowest (8.2 percent).

Sales and rent for fast food/carryout restaurants, by shopping-center location

Sales were highest at side-mall locations, and rents were highest at center-court locations

Location	Sales*	Rent*
All locations	$278.83	$26.52
Center court	346.12	36.20
Anchor court	204.78	16.72
Main mall	234.71	21.15
Side mall	368.67	34.59

**median values per square foot of gross leasable area for 1990 at super-regional centers*

Source: Urban Land Institute. *Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers, 1990*

** The Urban Land Institute defines a super-regional shopping center as one that offers extensive general merchandise, apparel, furniture and home furnishings and has at least three full-line department stores, each occupying no less than 100,000 square feet.*

rate), entertainment outlets (68 percent conversion) and discount department stores (62 percent conversion) also performed well. For the most part, however, mall stores did not fare as well. Overall buyer conversion among all stores was 48 percent, and of the 26 types of retail outlets studied, 14 had buyer conversion rates below the 48 percent average for all stores.

Higher profits, sales and costs

Data from the National Restaurant Association's *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990* indicates that both full-menu tableservice and limited-menu, no tableservice (fast food)

Spotlight on food courts

Food courts have become an attraction in many shopping centers, allowing consumers to select items from a number of different food outlets. According to the *1990 CARLSONREPORT Food Court Survey*, food-court sales advanced 24 percent in 1990. Of the 16 food categories covered in the CARLSONREPORT survey, 13 reported double digit increases in average unit sales volume, and only one (ice cream) posted a decline in unit sales. Barbecue restaurants led the way with a 68 percent increase in average unit sales, followed by potatoes (up 54 percent) and seafood (up 47 percent).

Among food-court tenants, chicken restaurants had the highest average unit sales in 1990 ($557,545) followed by hamburger ($472,665) and pizza ($389,957) restaurants. Chicken restaurants accounted for the largest share of food-court sales (11.44 cents per dollar). Chicken, hamburger and pizza sales combined to make up almost one-third of all food-court purchases.

The other notable change in food courts in 1990, according to CARLSONREPORT, was the growth in presence of national chains among food-court tenants. In 1989, 33 percent of food courts had more local than national tenants. In 1990, the percentage fell to 4 percent.

A profile of shopping-center patrons

In order to be successful in any location, restaurateurs must be aware of the demographics of their customers. According to Stillerman Jones & Co.'s *National Benchmarks, 1991*, shopping-center patrons had the following demographic characteristics:

- Nearly two out of three shopping-center patrons were women.
- Thirty-one percent of shoppers were between 30 and 44 years old, and an additional 25 percent were between 20 and 29 years old.
- The average shopper had an estimated household income of $38,886. Households with annual income below $15,000 and of $75,000 or more accounted for the smallest shares of all shopping-center patrons (13 percent and 9 percent respectively).
- Nearly six out of 10 shoppers had no children at home.
- Forty-four percent of shoppers visited a shopping center to shop, look around or browse; 30 percent went for a specific purchase.
- Seven out of 10 shopping-center patrons came from home, and 61 percent were going home after leaving the shopping center.
- Half of all shopping-center patrons spent less than one hour at the center: the average patron spent 68 minutes shopping.
- Each shopper spent an estimated $45.65 while in the shopping center. Women spent more on average than men ($48.59 compared with $40.48). Adults between 45 and 54 had the highest estimated expenditure ($57.08), while teenagers between 15 and 19 had the lowest ($27.65).

Operating data for restaurants by location, 1989: Shopping-center restaurants versus sole-occupant restaurants

	Full-menu tableservice		Limited-menu no tableservice	
	In shopping center	Sole occupant	In shopping center	Sole occupant
Average check	$8.54	$9.15	$4.21	$4.14
Average daily seat turnover	1.9	1.5	6.4	2.8
Annual employee turnover rate				
All employees	122%	109%	128%	138%
Salaried employees	67	50	67	100
Hourly employees	134	122	138	148
Number of full-time-equivalent employees	39.5	44.0	14.0	18.5
Sales per full-time-equivalent employee	$21,165	$21,197	$25,692	$24,104
Payroll per full-time-equivalent employee	$ 6,814	$ 7,004	$ 7,525	$ 6,707
Sales per square foot	$ 224	$ 187	$ 278	$ 223
Gross profit per square foot	$ 149	$ 123	$ 194	$ 147

Note: *All values are medians.*

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990*

establishments located in shopping centers have higher profits per square foot than stand-alone (sole occupant) units.

In 1989, full-menu tableservice restaurants located in shopping centers/malls posted a median gross profit of $149 per square foot, compared with $123 per square foot median gross profit for sole-occupant, full-menu tableservice restaurants. The difference was even greater for fast food (limited-menu, no tableservice establishments), as those located in shopping centers reported a median $194 in gross profits per square foot, compared with $147 for sole occupants.

Sales per square foot and total occupation costs per square foot were also higher for restaurants located in shopping centers. Among full-menu tableservice restaurants, those located in shopping centers had median sales of $224 per square foot and median occupation costs of $17.07 per square foot, compared with sales of $187 per square foot and occupation costs of $12.16 per square foot for sole-occupant establishments. Fast food restaurants located in shopping centers had median sales of $278 per square foot and occupation costs of $20.86 per square foot. This compares with sales of $223 per square foot and occupation costs of $12.16 per square foot for sole occupants.

Other differences

Shopping-center restaurants had higher average daily seat turnover than sole-occupant units did (1.9, compared with 1.5 for full-menu tableservice establishments and 6.4, compared with 2.8 for fast food restaurants). Average check size was lower for full-menu tableservice restaurants located in shopping centers than for sole occupants ($8.54 versus $9.15), but the opposite was true for fast food restaurants. Those located in shopping centers had higher average checks than those that were sole occupants ($4.21 versus $4.14).

Employment characteristics differed for shopping-center restaurants and sole occupants, perhaps due to the fact that those located in malls may be open a limited number of hours. For full-menu tableservice establishments, those located in shopping centers had fewer full-time-equivalent employees than did sole-occupant units (39.5 compared with 44.0). Sales and payroll per full-time-equivalent employees were also lower for shopping-center restaurants, and employee turnover was higher.

For limited-menu, no tableservice restaurants, the story was somewhat different. Once again, operations located in shopping centers had fewer full-time-equivalent employees (14.0, compared with 18.5 for sole occupants). However, sales and payroll per full-time-equivalent employee were higher for shopping-center locations than for sole occupants. Employee turnover was lower for shopping-center locations, particularly among salaried employees.

—Nancy Michalski

Italian restaurants post continued traffic growth

In 1990, customer traffic at Italian restaurants increased 4 percent, which was double the industry growth rate. Lunch traffic at Italian establishments continued to prosper as America's passion for pasta continued unabated.

According to CREST,* overall Italian-restaurant traffic growth posted healthy gains in 1990, up 4 percent compared with a 2 percent advance for the restaurant industry as a whole. Italian restaurants have shown strong traffic gains compared with the industry since 1986. However, over the past four years, the rate of traffic growth at Italian restaurants has slowed. For example, Italian-restaurant traffic growth was a red-hot 7 percent in 1988.

Much of Italian-restaurant traffic growth has come from the moderate-check upscale restaurant segment, in part due to an expanding number of units. In 1990, moderate-check upscale Italian restaurants represented 42 percent of total Italian-restaurant traffic, up from a 34 percent share in 1986. Midscale Italian restaurants still captured the majority of traffic, registering 52 percent, which was down 7 percentage points compared with 1986. Higher-check upscale restaurants represented a smaller 6 percent share of total Italian-restaurant traffic in 1990, a slight decline from 1986.

Customer counts at moderate-check upscale Italian restaurants jumped in 1990, up 18 percent versus 5 percent for the total moderate-check upscale segment. This compares to a 3 percent decline in traffic at midscale Italian restaurants and a 12 percent decline at higher-check upscale Italian restaurants (see chart).

Counter to the overall industry trend, on-premises traffic growth in Italian restaurants outperformed off-premises growth. In 1990, on-premises traffic at Italian restaurants grew 8 percent compared with a 6 percent decline in off-premises traffic. On-premises traffic at midscale Italian restaurants grew 3 percent compared with a 14 percent decline in off-premises traffic. Still, Italian restaurants had the highest ratio of takeout traffic to total traffic among all midscale concepts (a 32 percent share). In contrast, off-premises traffic at moderate-check upscale Italian places, although only a small portion of traffic, remained strong.

Lunch traffic advanced

Lunch traffic at Italian restaurants continued to prosper during 1990. Traffic for the midday meal was up a strong 16 percent compared with a 1 percent gain for the industry as a whole. However, the shift toward eating in Italian restaurants at noon may have affected dinner customer counts, as traffic for the evening meal advanced a smaller 2 percent.

Despite the advances in lunch traffic, dinner still remained the meal of choice for most Italian-restaurant goers. Dinner accounted for two-thirds of traffic at Italian restaurants in 1990 compared with a lower 41 percent for the overall restaurant industry.

The top ethnic food

According to the National Restaurant Association's *The Market for Ethnic Foods*, one-third (33 percent) of adults rated Italian food (other than pizza) as their favorite ethnic food, making Italian food the top choice. Moreover, nearly half (46 percent) of respondents had eaten Italian food (other than pizza) at restaurants in the past month—more than had eaten any other type of ethnic food in the past month. Three-fourths (76 percent) of customers have tried Italian food in the past.

What are the characteristics of consumers' favorite Italian restaurants? According to study results, large portions, friendly people and service, freshness of ingredients, and quality of food were the top characteristics that adults cited. In contrast, menu variety ranked high in Chinese restaurants and the speed of service ranked high in Mexican restaurants.

According to the study, two-thirds (66 percent) of adults agreed that people would eat more ethnic food in restaurants if the dishes were described better and more accurately on menus. Consequently, it is possible that one way to continue to boost consumer interest in Italian restaurants, as well as in all types of ethnic food, would be to describe dishes more thoroughly.

Who is the typical Italian-cuisine consumer? Survey results indicated that those most likely to have tried Italian food (other than pizza) were patrons 18 to 34 years old, with household incomes of $35,000 or more, and residents of metro areas with populations of 1 million or more.

High check size, low promotion use

CREST data show that the average check size per eater was higher at Italian restaurants than at most other tableservice restaurants. In 1990, midscale Italian res-

Popularity of ethnic food types at restaurants

More adults report having eaten Italian food at restaurants during the previous month than any other type of ethnic food*

Ethnic food	Percent of adults who have eaten the ethnic food in past month	Percent of adults who have tried the ethnic food in past
Italian	46%	76%
Chinese	45	78
Mexican	41	74
Greek	10	35
French	9	45
Spanish	9	39
Japanese	7	36
German	6	38

*excludes pizza

Source: National Restaurant Association, *The Market for Ethnic Foods*, 1989

*CREST stands for Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, a diary survey conducted by the NPD marketing and research companies.

Percent change in traffic at Italian restaurants, 1987 through 1990

Italian restaurants have shown strong traffic gains compared with the industry as a whole

	1987	1988	1989	1990
Total Italian	14%	7%	4%	4%
Total industry	4	1	1	2
Midscale Italian	15	5	−1	−3
Total midscale	−1	−2	1	−1
Moderate-check upscale Italian	11	9	15	18
Total moderate-check upscale	2	−3	8	5
Higher-check upscale Italian	17	18	1	−12
Total higher-check upscale	−3	4	−5	−6

Note: *Percent change is over prior year.*
Source: NPD/CREST Annual Household Reports

Favorite menu items at Italian restaurants, 1990

Pasta dishes were popular across the board

	Percent of eater occasions on which food item was included		
Food item	**Midscale Italian**	**Moderate-check upscale Italian**	**Higher-check upscale Italian**
Pizza	39%	15%	3%
Spaghetti	16	21	13
Other pasta	26	44	50
Side-dish salad	27	51	59
Alcoholic beverages	11	24	64

Source: NPD/CREST Annual Household Report, 1990

taurants posted an average check size per eater (excluding tips) that was 25 percent higher than that for total midscale restaurants ($5.93 versus $4.73). Similarly, the average check was higher at moderate-check upscale Italian restaurants ($8.15) than at all moderate-check upscale restaurants ($7.87), and the average check was noticeably higher at higher-check upscale Italian places ($23.57) than for the higher-check upscale segment as a whole ($15.62).

One factor contributing to the higher check size at Italian restaurants was the relatively low use of promotions. In 1990, promotions were used on 13 percent of all eater occasions** in midscale Italian restaurants, on 11 percent of eater occasions in moderate-check upscale Italian places, and on 7 percent of occasions in higher-check upscale Italian places. By comparison, promotions were used on 16 percent of eater occasions in the midscale restaurant segment, 15 percent in moderate-check upscale restaurants, and 13 percent at higher-check upscale restaurants. Also, alcoholic beverages were more likely to be ordered at Italian places, thereby driving check sizes upward.

*** An eater occasion is one meal eaten by one person.*

Favorite Italian foods

Pasta was the most frequently ordered entree at Italian restaurants. In 1990, pasta was included in two out of every five eater occasions at midscale Italian restaurants, and in three out of five eater occasions at both moderate-check and higher-check upscale Italian restaurants. Side-dish salads were included in more than one-fourth of eater occasions at midscale Italian restaurants and in more than half of occasions at upscale Italian places.

Although the incidence of ordering spaghetti at Italian restaurants remained relatively stable between 1989 and 1990, the incidence of ordering other types of pasta surged. In 1990, 26 percent of eater occasions at Italian midscale restaurants included pasta other than spaghetti, up from 21 percent in 1989. Similarly, 44 percent of eater occasions at moderate-check upscale Italian places included pasta other than spaghetti, up from 40 percent in 1989.

Pizza was popular at midscale Italian places (included in two out of five eater occasions), but was ordered less often at upscale Italian places. Alcoholic beverages were more popular at Italian restaurants than at other types of establishments. For example, nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of eater occasions at higher-check upscale Italian restaurants included an alcoholic beverage, compared with about one-third (36 percent) for the higher-check upscale segment as a whole.

Pasta passion

U.S. consumption of pasta has been steadily increasing since 1982. According to the National Pasta Association, in 1990 the estimated consumption of pasta in the United States was 18.4 pounds per person, or 4.6 billion pounds. By comparison, in 1982, the per capita consumption was 12.9 pounds, a total of 3.0 billion pounds. Moreover, the National Pasta Association projects that per capita consumption will reach 30.6 pounds by 2000.

A 1988 survey conducted by the Roper Organization for the National Pasta Association revealed that one-third (30 percent) of Americans said they eat a lot of pasta. More respondents in the Northeast (38 percent) said they eat a lot of pasta than did respondents in the South (24 percent).

Pasta is also popular with the at-home market. According to *Progressive Grocer*, national pasta sales at grocery stores reached $1.6 billion in 1989, an 8 percent increase over 1988. Macaroni dinners and pasta dinners (other than spaghetti) showed particularly strong gains.

—Elizabeth Gordon

Foodservice Market Measure—January 1991

After trending downward in the fall of 1990, the proportion of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day held relatively steady from November 1990 through January 1991. Slightly less than half of all adults, 48 percent, were industry patrons on a typical January 1991 day versus 50 percent a year earlier. Compared with 12 months prior, on-premises patronage, particularly for lunch, is clearly showing the effect of the economic downturn.

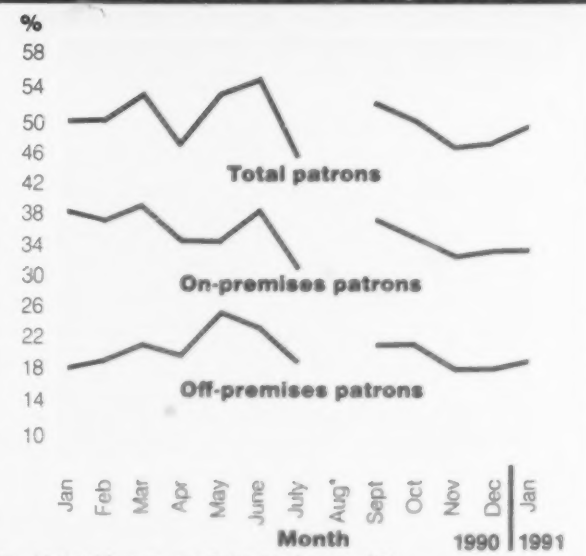
As the unemployment rate climbed to 6.2 percent in January 1991, from 5.2 percent in January 1990, the proportion of adults who were lunch patrons declined from 31 percent to 24 percent. Nevertheless, the 24 percent level has remained unchanged for three months despite rising unemployment. Although the proportion of adults purchasing carry-out lunches was 7 percent this January versus 10 percent a year earlier, most of the decrease occurred in on-premises business. The proportion of adults who reported that they were on-premises lunch patrons on a typical day was 6 percentage points lower than last year, down from 23 percent in January 1990 to 17 percent in January 1991.

In addition to the decrease at lunch, patronage at breakfast was off slightly, and the proportion of adults reporting that they ate an on-premises snack was off from 5 percent in 1990 to just 2 percent in January 1991. In contrast, little change was evident in comparing January 1990 to January 1991 in the proportion of adults who were dinner patrons on a typical day.

The accompanying table shows that significant declines in on-premises patronage in January 1991 versus a year earlier were evident for men, middle-income consumers and those residing in the Midwest.

—Susan Mills

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons



*No Market Measure was fielded in August 1990.
Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were on-premises patrons on a typical day by demographics

	January 1990	January 1991	Percentage point change
Sex			
Male	43%	36%	−7*
Female	33	30	−3
Age			
18 to 24 years old	45	46	+1
25 to 34 years old	43	31	−12*
35 to 44 years old	38	31	−7
45 to 54 years old	28	35	+8
55 to 64 years old	47	29	−18*
65 years old and older	29	30	+1
Annual household income			
$40,000 or more	48	42	−6
$20,000 to $39,999	36	25	−9*
Less than $20,000	31	30	−1
Region			
East	32	31	−1
Midwest	42	28	−14*
South	40	36	−4
West	35	38	+3

*significant difference
Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were on-premises patrons on a typical day

Meal period	January 1990	January 1991	Percentage point change
On-premises	38%	33%	−5*
Breakfast	6	4	−2
Lunch	23	17	−6*
Dinner	15	14	−1
Snacks	5	2	−3

*significant difference
Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Foodservice Market Measure

The Foodservice Market Measure is based on 1,000 telephone interviews, conducted by the Gallup Organization each month, with a nationally representative sample of adults age 18 and older. Each person is asked the same questions:

1. Which of the following did you do yesterday?

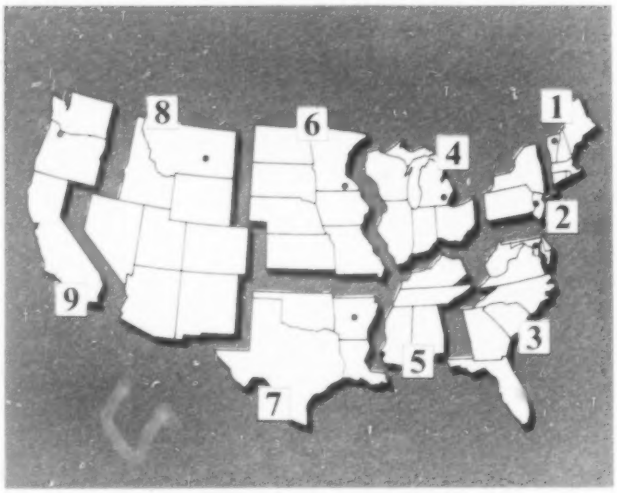
☐ Ate on the premises of a restaurant, fast food place, cafeteria or any other place where you purchased a meal or snack.

☐ Purchased takeout food "to go" or had it delivered.

2. Was the food you ate on premises yesterday for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

3. Was the takeout food you purchased or had delivered for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

The monthly tracking of purchases is supplemented by quarterly inquiries on topics of industry interest.



1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: Lydonville, VT
Association members: Mary and Jim O'Reilly
Operation: The Wildflower Inn
Profile: Inn and upscale restaurant
In business: Inn 5½ years, restaurant 2 years
Seats: 32
Meals served: Breakfast to guests, dinner to public

The slow economy combined with a poor snowfall has brought business down 10 to 20 percent at The Wildflower Inn, says co-owner **Mary O'Reilly.** "The snow hasn't been that good this year, and we usually do a fairly good tourist trade when skiers come to Burke Mountain," she says.

O'Reilly and her husband **Jim** encourage families to stay at the 20-room inn. "I know that's unusual for an inn to encourage families with children to come, but we like to have families here. We have children of our own, and we saw that there was a real market for people who want to enjoy the country but don't want to leave their children behind," O'Reilly says.

The inn is situated on a country road and boasts extensive flower gardens and elaborate landscaping so that guests may commune with nature.

2 MID-ATLANTIC

Location: Mercerville, NJ
Association member: Gary Fuerst
Operation: GreenStreets Restaurant
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 6 years
Seats: 50
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"We're doing pretty good, but we're down from past years like everybody else," says **Gary Fuerst,** general manager of GreenStreets Restaurant. Fuerst is keeping an eye on costs, and he tries to bring customers in with early-bird specials.

The restaurant is off a main road, in the woods, and has a rustic look with a fireplace and country-style decor. The cozy atmosphere makes the establishment especially popular with couples, says Fuerst. During the day, professionals fill the tables for lunch. GreenStreets serves steaks, chops and fresh fish and features eight specials each night.

Fuerst says that a restaurant's two greatest priorities should be "food presentation and service. Most of our staff has been with us for a while, and they provide excellent service," he says.

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Columbia, MD
Association member: Marsha Berman
Operation: Cover to Cover Bookstore Cafe
Profile: Mid to upscale restaurant with adjacent bookstore
In business: 2½ years
Seats: 50
Meals served: Lunch, dinner, Saturday breakfast, Sunday brunch

Reading a book while eating dinner is something people often resort to when dining alone, but at Cover to Cover it's one of the reasons people choose to eat there. Cover to Cover is a bookstore and cafe combined. "People will come in and look around the bookstore and then be lured into the cafe by the aroma. The same is true of diners who go into the bookstore after eating because they saw other people reading interesting books," says manager **Val Slater.**

The quaint establishment offers live music on Friday and Saturday nights. Book browsers and diners are entertained by jazz musicians, folk singers and classical guitar players. Around holidays, the operation receives many reservations for its high-tea service. The tea features scones, finger sandwiches and tea for $6.95.

"We have a lot of two-tops, and the atmosphere is cozy and relaxed, so a lot of couples come in. During the day, we get business-people. At night we get people in their 30s who want to enjoy the music and our large selection of good desserts," says Slater.

4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Walled Lake, MI
Association member: Norman LePage
Operation: Nifty Norman's
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 13 years
Seats: 110
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Right now our business is up about 5 percent, mostly because we're using more promotions," says **Neil Cooley,** general manager. Cooley says they sent out a personal mailer to individual homes with a letter from owner **Norman LePage.** "It was a thank-you letter for their previous business, and we also gave them a gift certificate to use when they come back in," says Cooley. "Because of the economy, people are looking for good deals when they eat out."

At the beginning of this year, the restaurant's concept was changed to that of a family-style restaurant. "During the end of last year, we could tell that things were getting tighter and that we needed to change our concept to attract more business," says Cooley. Less expensive entrees were added to the menu, which features everything from Mexican items to fresh fish, steaks and sandwiches.

Cooley says Nifty Norman's will "stick with the new format for at least a year to gauge how it affects business. But so far it seems to be a change for the better."

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Natchez, MS
Association member: Loveta Byrne
Operation: The Burn
Profile: Bed and breakfast
In business: 9 years
Seats: 80
Meals served: Breakfast for guests, dinner

Tourists wishing to return to the era of the Old South fill The Burn to capacity from March through April. "Our biggest tourist season begins in March with the Old Homes Tour. There are pageants four nights a week, the flowers are blooming and it gives people a chance to relive the glory days of the South," says owner **Loveta Byrne.**

Guests staying in one of the inn's 12 rooms sleep on plump canopy beds in rooms filled with antiques. "The furniture might be chipped a little, but it's the real stuff," says Byrne. A big Southern breakfast greets overnight guests, with homemade biscuits, eggs, plain or cheese grits, bacon, sausage or ham, and homemade preserves.

The Burn also serves dinner to tour groups, local community organizations and companies. Dinner guests get a tour of the house while sipping mint juleps and then sit down to a meal of Byrne's culinary delights. "We try to give them a taste of true Southern hospitality. We want them to feel like they have been invited into someone's home," says Byrne.

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Austin, MN
Association member: Eugene Roden
Operation: Wagon Wheel
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 18 years
Seats: 86
Meal served: Dinner

"Business is generally good, but it was best around 1982–1983 and poorest around 1985," says owner **Eugene Roden.** Wagon Wheel did good business after the Hormel Co. opened a plant in the area in the late '70s that drew in new workers. But a union strike in 1985 caused conflict and unrest in the city, and that rippled into area restaurant business.

The Wagon Wheel is primarily a steak house, but among its dinner entrees are seafood, pork, lamb, veal and chicken items.

Weather conditions play a big part in the operation's business. "We're rural; we're located three miles outside the city. People won't come out in bad weather," Roden says.

Every January, the Wagon Wheel closes, and the owners take a vacation. But even while on vacation, they are thinking of their customers—and of promoting the restaurant. From their vacation site (the Caribbean, Mexico or the southern United States), the owners send personal postcards to their regular customers; 124 were sent this past January.

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Little Rock, AR
Association member: Don Phelan
Operation: Browning's Mexican Express
Profile: Fast food takeout operation
In business: 4 years
Seats: None
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Catering to the public's growing demand for convenience, Browning's Mexican Express serves its customers fast by offering only drive-thru or walk-up service. "It's a small square—about 17 by 21 feet," says manager **Susan Goolsby.** "Only four people can work at one time, and everyone has to be able to get along really well."

Business has been brisk at the operation, attracting the young couples and singles who live in the apartment complexes surrounding the unit. "We get people who are on the go constantly. They like to stop here on the way home from work because they know we have good food at reasonable prices that they can get quick," says Goolsby.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Roundup, MT
Association member: Mark Petrie
Operation: Busy Bee Cafe
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 22 years
Seats: 250
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

When the temperature dipped below zero and stayed there during recent months, business froze as well at the Busy Bee, according to owner **Mark Petrie.** But now that the weather is warming up, people are coming in to redeem coupons that Petrie ran with ads in the local paper. One of the coupons entitles customers to pie and coffee for $1, just the thing to chase away the cold.

In the wintertime, Petrie says that 80 percent of his customers are local, but in the summer the Busy Bee draws many tourists.

The specialty of the house is the salad bar stocked with homemade items. "All our cooks are ranch cooks—they used to cook for ranch hands. We cook roasts every day and make our own gravy, vegetable soup and spaghetti sauce. I think people appreciate the effort to make everything from scratch. It just tastes better," he says.

9 PACIFIC

Location: Portland, OR
Association member: Tiger Warren
Operation: Macheezmo Mouse
Profile: Upscale, quickservice chain
In business: 10 years
Seats: 85
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

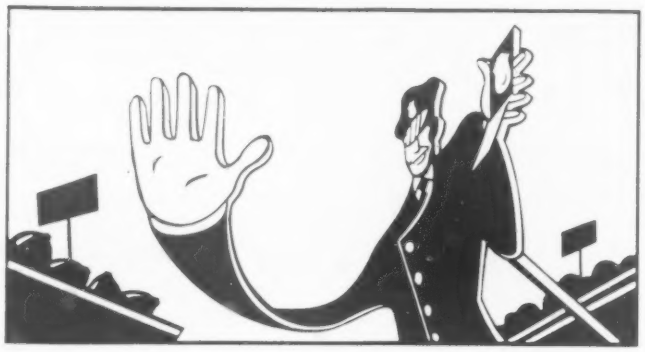
"We're doing pretty good, not bad at all for a brutally tough industry," says owner **Tiger Warren,** with tongue in cheek. Warren founded the Macheezmo Mouse chain with a mission of providing "a new breed of fast food for people who like to feel fit." The operation serves Mexican food that is either grilled, baked or steamed so that it is lower in calories and fat, but still filling.

The concept appealed to Warren because "it's the way I like to eat—hearty food that is healthy for your heart as well. Also, there was nobody out there doing it, so it was niche marketing," says Warren.

The units are spread throughout Seattle, San Francisco and Portland. The name of the restaurant was the result of brainstorming efforts of Warren and some friends. "We couldn't think of a name, so we started to get silly and throw out all these really bad puns. We thought Macheezmo Mouse was funny, so it stuck," he says.

—Jennifer Batty

Cardboard cops cut out crime



Nothing fends off crime better than round-the-clock security, but few businesses can afford such protection. Some innovative Kroger supermarket operators in Dallas, however, have found a way to raise security without raising their budgets. The guards they choose are quiet, attentive and cheap. They're also made of cardboard.

Although at first thought, cardboard cops may seem to lack the punch necessary to have much effect on crime, the life-size stand-up photographs of local officers have been quite successful as deterrents. The cutouts—based on an idea developed by British "bobbies"—are not expected to actually prevent crime but to subtly (or not so subtly) remind customers of the ramifications of shoplifting. When the project began, each "officer" had a sign attached that read "Shoplifting is a crime." Messages can be easily altered to fit a variety of purposes and perpetrations.

Although there is not yet concrete proof that these cardboard cops lower crime rates, both Kroger and a hardware store have reported positive results. Apparently, the sight of a badge—even a cardboard one—is enough to make a would-be offender think twice.

—National Association of Convenience Stores

Coffee for one

For restaurateurs who often end up pouring unsold coffee down the drain, Procter & Gamble may have a solution to save both grounds and dollars.

The company recently introduced Folgers Singles, which are individually wrapped bags of coffee, suitable for plopping into a mug of boiling water. Similar to tea bags, each "single" contains a combination of freeze-concentrated and ground coffee that produce a cupful of brew in a matter of minutes. The bags can be microwaved to make coffee in a matter of seconds.

Although tea bags have been in common use for decades and coffee bags are available in Europe, Folgers is the first major coffee brand to be mass marketed in individual servings in the United States.

—*Advertising Age*

Zapping the zing from ads

A dark shadow looms before one of the most popular—and most lucrative—advertising arenas: television. The culprit? The VCR.

As technology continues to simplify the videocassette recorder, advertisers fear that more and more commercials will be lost—zapped from the screen with a touch of the fast-forward button. Today, seven out of 10 households own VCRs, but they are used mainly for viewing rental movies. Only 3 percent of viewing time is spent watching taped programs (according to A.C. Nielsen), probably because of the complexity of programming a VCR.

Simplification, however, is inevitable, as new products and developments make VCRs more user-friendly. Nielsen studies estimate that viewers currently ignore 40 percent of the commercials they tape, either by blindly speeding through commercial breaks or by not watching taped programs—and that number could rise. Viewer antipathy toward commercials continues to grow: Two-thirds of viewers polled last year by Video Storyboard Tests reported that they preferred television with no commercials at all (up from 53 percent in 1985).

Advertisers are already developing counterattacks, as agencies design spots to suit a four-second fast-forward glimpse rather than a 30-second long look. Changes include more obvious logo placement and "supers"—words flashed on the screen that are visible throughout the quick zip.

—*Wall Street Journal*

Snooze and fly

Los Angeles is known as a driving city, and for the many locals who frequent its international airport, it's also a parking city—and an expensive one. Marriott Hotels, however, has developed a way to lure those hometown parking dollars away from airport lots and into its own coffers while providing harried travelers with a comfortable alternative to the pre-flight rush.

For about the same price as a week's worth of long-term parking, Angelenos can stay at the L.A. Airport Marriott Hotel the night before a departure and receive deluxe accommodations, a meal for two, complimentary valet parking, free shuttle service to the airport and underground parking for the duration of the trip. The

package has proved popular with early-morning travelers who no longer need worry about traffic jams, construction delays or a long commute in the predawn hours.

The L.A. Airport Marriott also offers guests another special service: ticket-printing machines that allow passengers to alter their flight plans without ever facing an airline ticket counter.

—*Cornell Quarterly*

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Foodservice Market Measure—December 1990

After trending downward from September through November, the proportion of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day in December 1990 leveled off at 47 percent. Compared with the first half of 1990, when slightly more than half of all adults were foodservice patrons on a typical day, it seems clear that worsening economic conditions are having an impact on the incidence of industry patronage.

Lunch is the meal period where the decline in patronage is most evident. Although 30 percent of adults were foodservice patrons for lunch on a typical day in the first half of 1990, the proportion slipped to 24 percent in November and December.

A look at the demographics suggests that both men and women were less inclined to be lunch patrons in November and December than they were during the first half of 1990; the proportion who were lunch patrons was off five percentage points for each month.

A somewhat different picture emerges when lunch patronage by age is examined. Significant decreases in patronage have occurred among young adults 18 to 24 years old and among baby boomers, most of whom are between 25 and 44 years of age. In contrast, little change has occurred in the proportion of adults 45 years of age and older who are lunch patrons, despite deteriorating economic conditions.

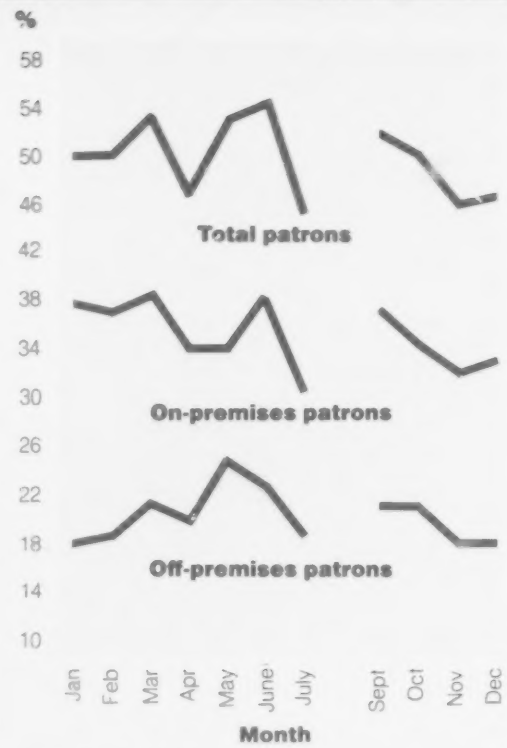
On-premises versus off-premises

After declining in November, the proportion of adults who were on-premises patrons changed little in December. On-premises patronage averaged 32 to 33 percent in November and December, off from 37 percent in the first six months of the year.

Off-premises patronage averaged 18 percent on a typical December day—no change from November, but off from earlier in the year.

—Susan Mills

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons in 1990



Note: *Because of a Gallup error, there is no data for August 1990*
Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were lunch patrons on a typical day

	January to June 1990	November to December 1990
Males	33%	27%
Females	26	21
18 to 24-year-olds	40	32
25 to 34-year olds	35	28
35 to 44-year-olds	30	23
45 to 54-year-olds	28	32
55 to 64-year-olds	24	22
65-year-olds or older	19	15
All adults	30	24

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Foodservice Market Measure

The Foodservice Market Measure is based on 1,000 telephone interviews, conducted by the Gallup Organization each month, with a nationally representative sample of adults age 18 and older. Each person is asked the same questions:

1. Which of the following did you do yesterday?

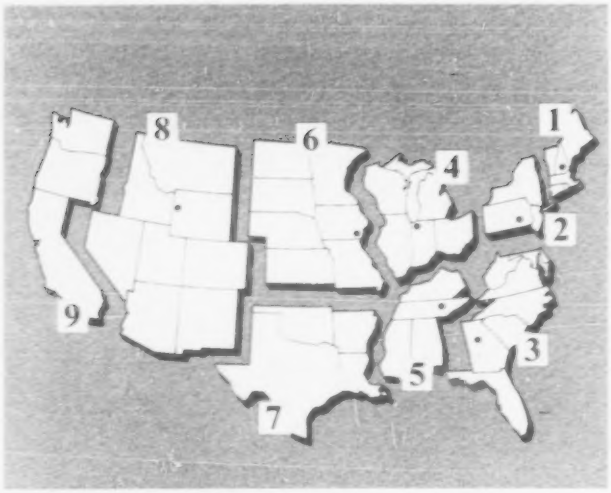
☐ Ate on the premises of a restaurant, fast food place, cafeteria or any other place where you purchased a meal or snack.

☐ Purchased takeout food "to go" or had it delivered.

2. Was the food you ate on premises yesterday for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

3. Was the takeout food you purchased or had delivered for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

The monthly tracking of purchases is supplemented by quarterly inquiries on topics of industry interest.



1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: Concord, NH
Association member: Robert Arnold
Operation: The Red Blazer Restaurant and Pub
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 6 years
Seats: 200
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Business has been soft this year at the Red Blazer, according to owner **Robert Arnold.** "We're probably down 10 to 15 percent from last year. The economy has hurt us, but we're also finding our beverage sales are down. People today skip the drinks to keep their check averages down," he says.

The Red Blazer is divided into two dining options—one side features prime rib, seafood and high-ticket menu items, the pub side offers patrons sandwiches, finger foods, appetizers and small dinners. "I've noticed that more and more people are going to the pub side and splitting a plate of nachos instead of ordering a prime-rib dinner," says Arnold. To entice diners to the restaurant side, Arnold has added a heart-healthy section to the menu.

Brunch business has increased by 40 to 50 percent since Arnold worked out trades with local TV and radio stations. "The advertising really helped draw in the people," says Arnold. Diners also enjoy early-bird specials seven days a week for $8.95.

2 MID-ATLANTIC

Location: Harrisburg, PA
Association member: Anthony Salomoney
Operation: Hope Station Restaurant
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 5 years
Seats: 100
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Business is 10 to 15 percent off of last year's monthly gross—but at least it's stable," says **Anthony Salomoney,** owner of Hope Station Restaurant. Salomoney is keeping an even sharper eye on food cost, the payroll and operational expenses. He has also put off making major purchases for the time being. So far, he hasn't had to cut labor. "I've tried to spread out the burden of cutting back hours while keeping everybody working," says Salomoney.

Salomoney is also reducing radio and print advertising and using more direct advertising via in-house promotional material and a mailing list. "Right now, I am most interested in keeping regular customers coming back to us. A mailing list will allow me to be more targeted in my advertising," he says.

The building that houses the restaurant is more than 100 years old and was originally the Hope Station #2 firehouse.

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Conyers, GA
Association member: Dan Hunsicker
Operation: Mamie's Kitchen Biscuits
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 10 years
Seats: 40
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch

Until the weather warms up, business will remain slow at Mamie's Kitchen Biscuits, says manager **J.W. Pierce.** "It's just that time of year when people don't eat out much. But business will pick up in the summer," he says.

Pierce says the owners advertise occasionally in the local newspaper with coupon offers that usually result in a good return rate. "We don't need to advertise much, because we've been here 10 years and we're well established. We're like the neighborhood hangout," he says.

Mamie's is located in the middle of the business district and attracts professionals hungry for country-style breakfasts and dinners—and, of course, for the restaurant's homemade biscuits.

4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Valparaiso, IN
Association members: Chuck, Caroline and Russ Adams
Operation: Strongbow Inn
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 51 years
Seats: 400 including banquet facilities
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

The owners of the Strongbow Inn have noticed a strange phenomenon in their restaurant each time there is a recession or threat of one: their business goes up. "Our business has been great. Last year was our largest year ever," says Strongbow Inn co-owner **Russ Adams.** Adams operates the restaurant with his mother and father, **Caroline** and **Chuck Adams,** who bought the inn from his grandmother in 1968.

Turkeys could be seen dotting the land around the inn up until 1980. Now the Adams buy their turkey meat from two suppliers. "Our mainstay is turkey. We serve a complete turkey dinner, turkey Oscar, turkey dijon, turkey pies—we went through 130,000 pounds of birds last year," says Russ Adams. As business has grown over the years, so have the kitchen and dining rooms, which have taken over the small cabins in which patrons could spend the night back in the 1940s.

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Cookeville, TN
Association members: Brenda and Mike Migliore
Operation: Bobby Q's
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 8 years
Seats: 85
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Atmosphere can make or break a restaurant, accord-

ing to **Brenda Migliore,** who co-owns Bobby Q's with her husband **Mike.** "We try to have a happy atmosphere—pleasant and laid back," she says. "People often comment on how happy our servers seem. They enjoy their jobs, and we make it a jolly place. If customers get the feeling that serving them is a pleasure, then they will want to eat in your place again."

Migliore draws her waitstaff from a pool of college students in her community. Each potential server begins by acting as a server's helper until he or she knows the job well. "We always train people before putting them out on the floor—you never just throw somebody out there. In order to give good service, your servers have to know their jobs," says Migliore.

Bobby Q's specializes in barbecue items and catfish and attracts a large chunk of the business crowd. "We get a lot of repeats because of the good service and the good food," she says.

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Mount Pleasant, IA
Association member: David Heaton
Operation: Iris Restaurant
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 23 years
Seats: 250
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Everything was great, just great, until Thanksgiving," says **David Heaton,** owner of the Iris Restaurant. Then things "took a pause," he says. "Since the Middle East crisis and with the uncertain economy, the customer is insecure about his future," says Heaton.

Heaton has raised menu prices because of higher food costs and has had to trim employee hours with another jump in the minimum wage coming. "Here the tip-credit regulations are still the old way: I may have to trim some more hours off," he says.

The restaurant offers diners a diverse American menu with salmon, steak, prime rib and chicken items. As his customers grow warier, Heaton says he is making his advertising dollars go further by targeting his ads and using specifics about his food. "People get lazy sometimes with their ads and just put a general ad with their hours of operation and number in the dining section. That's money down the tubes these days. You've got to make your ads have punch, make them focused on your market," he advises.

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: New Orleans, LA
Association member: Wayne Pierce
Operation: Bon Ton Cafe
Profile: Mid to upscale restaurant
In business: 40 years
Seats: 114
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

At the Bon Ton Cafe, menu items are prepared in the old Cajun style of cooking, not the hot and spicy version that has gotten so much attention in recent years, says owner **Wayne Pierce.**

The restaurant, located on Magazine Street, draws its share of tourists, but local businesspeople also fill up the tables. The restaurant's friendly atmosphere helps attract diners, as do dishes such as Red Fish Bon Ton, Oysters Alvin and smothered eggplant with shrimp and crabmeat.

Renewed tourist interest in New Orleans has increased business recently, says Pierce, and he has not had to advertise yet to increase traffic.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Teton Village, WY
Association member: T.P. Mahin
Operation: Mangy Moose Saloon
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 22 years
Seats: 200
Meal served: Dinner

The Mangy Moose Saloon's location, close to Grand Teton National Park, Yellowstone National Park and the Jackson Hole ski area, garners a lot of tourists for the restaurant. "Summertime is the busiest time, but we get a lot of people in the winter when they come here to ski," says **Steve King,** general manager of the restaurant.

Locals also enjoy coming to the Mangy Moose, but they tend to steer clear of the restaurant when it is packed with tourists, says King.

Competition for the tourist trade is always tough among the area's eating establishments, says King, and the Mangy Moose tries to lure diners in by giving them ample food for their money and by providing excellent service.

9 PACIFIC

Location: Port Angeles, WA
Association member: Diane Nagler
Operation: First Street Haven Restaurant
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 14 years
Seats: 142
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch

To say that the First Street Haven Restaurant is cozy might be an understatement. The establishment is 10½ feet wide. "It's real cozy," says owner **Diane Nagler** with a laugh. "You have to have a good sense of humor to work here."

Although the waitstaff working at the First Street Haven might not have much room in which to maneuver, they do have a smoke-free environment. "This is such a small place that when I asked people as they came in if they wanted smoking or nonsmoking, they would laugh," says Nagler. Last August, Nagler made the place 100 percent nonsmoking and has not had one complaint. "I was a little worried, but the response has been wonderful," she says. She based her decision mostly on the health needs of her employees and because she felt the time was right for a completely nonsmoking operation.

Business has been up every year at the establishment, she says. Changing the menu frequently to include fresh flavors, such as those in Thai cuisine, helps jazz up the regular California eclectic menu. In the summertime, tourists waiting for the ferry to Victoria, Canada, pass the time in the restaurant's Victorian interior, with its rich woods and stained glass. "They're trapped here until the ferry comes, but we try to make the wait enjoyable for them," says Nagler.

—Jennifer Batty

Pizza-box revolution

In the name of convenience and environmentalism, the traditional cardboard pizza-delivery box is changing in shape, substance and even function.

Domino's Pizza has gone octagonal, shaving the corners off the standard pizza box to save materials and money. Pizza Hut is using recycled cardboard for its boxes and looking for ways to reduce its container's weight without lessening its stability.

But perhaps the most imaginative pizza-box innovation is by Eric Crockett of Toledo, Ohio. Crockett has added tear-away perforations to the pizza-box lid, enabling the customer to convert the lid into four

serving "plates." The box's side flaps form a rim for the plates that can be held by inserting the thumb and index finger through holes. And, of course, these throwaway pizza plates require no washing.

—Wall Street Journal

Hotel 2020

One day in the not-too-distant future, the ultimate family vacation may require much more than a station wagon, a road map and tickets to Disneyland. Travelers of the future may need a space shuttle and maps of the moon.

Japan's Shimizu Corporation has already outlined its plans to build the first hotel in space by the year 2020. The hotel would house up to 64 guests and include modern amenities such as toilets, showers, desks and liquid-screen television monitors—as well as the special treat of a window looking down on planet Earth.

Shimizu has had engineers investigating such a project since 1987. Hotel rooms would be built on the rim of a giant 462-foot-diameter wheel, rotating through space in order to generate gravity for the guests. The 7,500 tons of raw materials needed to build the structure would come from the moon.

Travelers to the hotel could expect to pay an out-of-this-world $45,000 for a visit.

—Washington Times

Flexible soul

Traditional American "soul food" is hard to define, but it encompasses the myriad dishes that have evolved from the kitchens of black Americans for hundreds of years: quickbreads, collard greens, Hop'n John and hominy grits, for example.

Although many soul-food dishes have traditionally been prepared with fatty meats and lots of salt, today's soul-food fans are finding that properly prepared soul food can be both comforting and nutritious.

For example, quickbreads are a good source of complex carbohydrates, and collard greens contain hefty amounts of vitamins A and C, folic acid and calcium. The hearty yam, too, is an excellent source of vitamin A. In addition, soul food's flexible nature makes it easy to use lean cuts instead of fatty meats and to replace salt with a dash of lemon instead.

—Diabetes Forecast

Service, please

It's not surprising, but efficient service is what frequent business travelers appreciate most when it comes to hotels, airlines and rental-car companies.

A survey conducted by Opinion Research Corporation polled 400 executives about their most important travel concerns. With regard to hotels, preparing an accurate bill was deemed most important (mentioned by nine out of 10 respondents). For airlines, on-time arrival was the concern mentioned the most (89 percent).

Other important hotel desires mentioned by more than 75 percent of respondents were efficient check-in, reliable message and wake-up service, and caring about customers.

Participants in the study were true business-travel experts, with the average respondent having logged 45 days of business travel in the past year, including 34 nights in hotels.

—Cornell Quarterly

Symphonic slices

As principal clarinetist for the Dallas Symphony, Stephen Girko produces notes for a living. In his spare time, however, it's his pizzas that help him earn applause.

Girko began a sideline catering business known as Eat My Pizza! in June of 1989 that combines Girko's clarinet-playing with pizza-making in an aural and culinary feast. Girko prepares gourmet pizzas for his clients (most of whom are symphony regulars) using homegrown tomatoes, Italian sausage, pepperoni and plenty of mozzarella. And for dessert? It's *musique a la mode:* a clarinet recital by the chef himself.

—Entrepreneur

Get answers to your legal questions... before they become legal problems

Order the newly revised 1991 *Legal Problem Solver* for the most current information on tip reporting, minimum wage, teen employment, taxes and more.

To order, call the National Restaurant Association at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960. The book is $34.95 for association members, $44.95 for nonmembers. Ask for publication MG410.

The Legal Problem Solver for Foodservice Operators

National Restaurant Association

NOISE LEVELS ■ NEIGHBORHOOD RESTAURANTS ■ HIRING CONTRACTORS

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION VOL. 11 NO. 4 APRIL 1991

RESTAURANTS USA

The Show makes history every year

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SEMINARS

Seminars scheduled during the National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show

Two-day seminar (5/18–5/19)
SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation
(Two-day, 16-hour certification course; deadline for registration is May 1.)

Saturday, 5/18

Full-day seminars
Banquet Management
Dining Room Management
Food Cost Management
Profitability
NEW! SERVSAFE/Responsible Alcohol Service

Half-day seminars
Kitchen Management
NEW! Legal Issues for Foodservice Operators
Promoting Your Restaurant
NEW! Service that Sells
The Labor Issue
NEW! Train-the-Trainer

Sunday, 5/19

Full-day seminars
Food Cost Management
Kitchen Management
Profitability
SERVSAFE/AFS Train-the-Trainer
Successful Buffet Management

Half-day seminars
Dining Room Management
Promoting Your Restaurant
Service that Sells
NEW! Stress Management
Theft Control

For further information on Show seminars, contact the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association, 250 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60606, or call (800) 765-2122; in Illinois, call (312) 715-1010.

EXECUTIVE STUDY GROUP SERIES

Tax Executives
4/2–5 Coronado, CA

Financial Officers
4/3–5 Coronado, CA

Environmental Affairs Officers
4/3–5 Boston, MA

Management Information Systems
4/16–19 Santa Fe, NM

Quality Assurance
4/24–26 Monterey, CA

Marketing Executives
5/15–18 Chicago, IL

MAECO
5/15–17 Chicago, IL

Foodservice Purchasing Managers
5/16–17 Chicago, IL

International Development Executives
6/12–14 San Francisco, CA

For more information on specific study groups, contact Philip Kralovec at (312) 853-2525.

The Executive Study Groups present semi-annual professional development programs for executives who would like to meet with their industry peers to share ideas and concerns. Executives in each of the aforementioned disciplines from member foodservice companies are welcome and encouraged to participate.

Note: *A new study group focusing on international development is currently forming. Any persons interested in participating in this group are encouraged to contact Philip Kralovec.*

COURSES AND BOOKS AVAILABLE

Certification Courses
Applied Foodservice Sanitation (AFS)
Applied Foodservice Purchasing
Controlling Costs in Foodservice
Effective Foodservice Marketing
Foodservice: A Managerial Approach
NEW! Foodservice Management Accounting
Foodservice Supervision: Achieving Success through People
Introduction to the Foodservice Industry/ Introduction to Foodservice Management
Legal Aspects of Foodservice Management
Management by Menu
NEW! Managing Foodservice Facilities and Equipment
Managing Quantity Food Operations
NEW! Nutrition for the Foodservice Manager
NEW! Principles of Professional Cooking

Self-Development Courses
Protecting Restaurant Profits: Managing Security
Effective Communication
Managing People
Restaurant Operations and Control
Restaurant Purchasing
Bar and Beverage Management
Helping People Grow
Service: Managing the Guest Experience

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Senior Director Jeffrey R. Prince
Editor (on leave) Sylvia Rivchun-Somerville
Acting Editor Paul Moomaw
Managing Editor Melanie A. Crosby
Staff Contributors
Jennifer Batty, Elizabeth Gordon, Robert E. Harrington, Larry Himelfarb, Philip Kralovec, Andrew McLauchlin, Nancy Michalski, Susan Mills, Anne Papa Curtis, B. Hudson Riehle, Denise Roach, Linda Way, Diane Welland
Art Direction
Magazine Covers Tom Bellucci, Richard Earle, Liz Daigetty
Administrative Assistant Susan Kessler
Editorial Secretary Ronda Bowers
Word Processing Operator Agnes Harkins
Intern Zari Malsawma

Editorial office and association headquarters 1200 Seventeenth St., N.W. Washington DC 20036-3097 (202) 331-5900
Chicago office 150 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2000 Chicago, IL 60601 (312) 853-2525

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Michael E. Hurst, owner
15th Street Fisheries, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Gearing up for the Show

Excitement is mounting for the upcoming 72nd National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show to be held in Chicago's McCormick Place from May 18 through May 22. This "Show of Shows" will feature almost 1,900 exhibitors on four huge floors, giving the approximately 100,000 attendees a look at all the latest in foodservice products, services and equipment.

Some of the highlights of the Show include the opening-day program with guest speaker Larry King, the American Culinary Classic, the 21st annual Culinary Arts Salon, the Salute to Excellence Forums and dinner, the Theatre Series, the Management Clinic, educational seminars and much more. Get all the Show details beginning on page 26.

The Show provides foodservice professionals with the chance to meet and share common concerns as well as learn about the freshest ideas in products and equipment. You can't afford to miss out on this opportunity to forge new friendships and make valuable contacts. Send in your Show registration form today to ensure your place at this important event.

Association calls for reform of teen-labor regulations

In reaction to a call for further teen-labor regulations and more severe criminal penalties for violations, foodservice industry representatives testified on March 19 at a Senate subcommittee hearing and asked that Congress not overregulate teen labor and thereby eliminate teenage jobs.

We think that the laws governing teen labor are antiquated and need to be updated to apply to contemporary work situations. To this end, we have submitted a proposal to the Secretary of Labor with eight changes we would like to see made in federal regulations.

Minimum-wage hike effective April 1

Operators should note that the federal minimum wage went up on April 1 from $3.80 to $4.25, and the tip credit increased from 45 percent to 50 percent. The association is still lobbying to have the wording of the law changed so that businesses grossing less than $500,000 a year will be exempted from federal wage requirements.

Parental-leave legislation under consideration

On March 20, the House Education and Labor Committee approved a bill that would require employers with 50 or more workers to provide 12 weeks of unpaid leave per year to employees to care for ill children, spouses, parents or for personal illness. The Senate is working on a comparable bill.

We have been monitoring this legislation and anticipate that it will be passed by Congress and vetoed by the President, as it was last year. We need to make our opinions known on this issue. Although we sympathize with the problems facing working parents, we think that providing better day-care options, rather than unpaid leave, is the solution.

Operators air concerns at ADA symposium

More than 100 foodservice professionals had the opportunity to share concerns and ask questions at the association's ADA Symposium, held on March 7 in Washington DC. Regulators explained the proposed

Great Menu Contest winners selected

regulations for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and answered questions from attendees.

This year's Great Menu Contest garnered almost 600 entries from around the United States and abroad. The contest judges, drawn from the trade press, food media and restaurant design industries, met in our association's Washington DC office to select the winners. The first grand-prize winner was China Coast Restaurant, operated by General Mills Restaurants, Inc., of Orlando, Florida; second grand prize was won by Embassy Suites Indianapolis and third grand prize was awarded to Boogies Diner, headquartered in Joppa, Maryland.

Three prize winners were selected in each of nine categories and will be on display along with the grand-prize winners at the Show. Be sure to stop by and see the winners.

Visit the association's booth at the Show

While you're at the Show, check out the National Restaurant Association's booth #3004. Information about our services will be available, and the "We're glad you're here!" program will be featured at the booth.

Anyone who comes to the booth and joins the association during the Show will be eligible to win a comprehensive computer package including an IBM PS/2 hardware system donated by IBM Inc.'s Retail Foodservice Division, as well as food cost management software from FOOD•TRAK and additional software from CaterMate and Great Plains Software.

In addition, staff members of the educational foundation will be at the booth with information about two new programs: SERVSAFE/Responsible Alcohol Service and Foodservice Management Professional (FMP) certification.

Responsible Alcohol Service is a training program designed to train owners, managers, bartenders and servers how to develop and implement responsible alcohol policies and procedures in their operations. The FMP certification program recognizes and certifies foodservice executives, managers, corporate trainers and educators who have demonstrated a high level of professionalism through their experience and education.

Complete details on both programs will be available at the booth. If you can't make it to the Show, call the foundation at (800) 765-2122 for information.

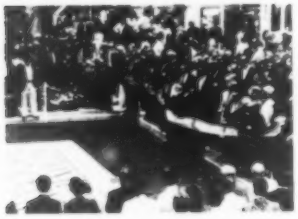
In March, 96 new members joined the association. We welcome all of you and hope we have the chance to get to know you at the Show in May.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Hurst

Michael E. Hurst
President and Chairman of the Board

COVER STORY: MAKE HISTORY AT THE 1991 SHOW

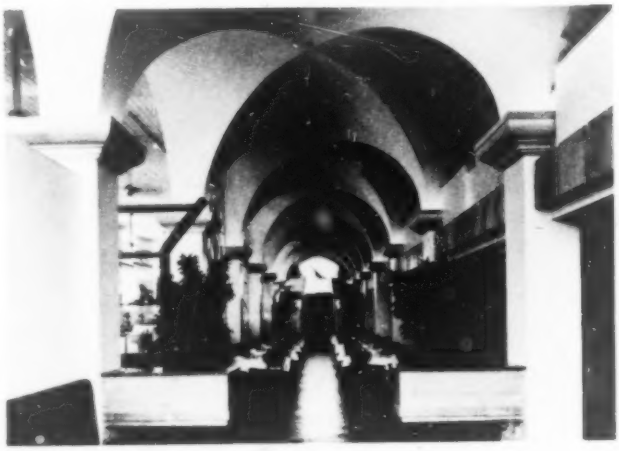


26 For 72 years, the annual National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show has been the place to feel the heartbeat of the industry. Now more than ever, in these competitive times, the Show's exhibits and educational programs can rejuvenate you and your business with the latest products, ideas and techniques. This Show preview and schedule will help you make your plans to attend.

SPECIALS

12 Restaurants in historic buildings
A foundation of history has brought these three establishments the flavor of success.

17 Noise levels in restaurants
One customer's music is another customer's noise. Before you adjust the volume, lend an ear to your patrons to discover the right amount of sound.



20 The restaurant around the corner
All across America, customers are returning to their neighborhood restaurants, where everyone's a regular and comfort is key.

24 Hiring a top-notch contractor
There's more to a good contractor than a sharp set of nails. When it's time to renovate or repair your restaurant, get to know your contractor before the sawdust starts to fly.

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Cover photo: Sixth annual National Restaurant Association Show, 1924
Inset: 1990 Show

Chefs gather at symposium on global cuisine

World-class chefs Paul Bocuse of France and Hans Bueschkens of Canada were just two of the many standout chefs who participated in the American Culinary Federation's (ACF) Symposium on Global Cuisine, held recently in Tampa, Florida. Premier chefs from the United States, China, France, Canada and Germany met to discuss nutritional trends, food products and cultural differences in cuisine.

Chef Paul Bocuse, voted French chef of the century last year, spoke to symposium attendees about the changing role of the chef.

Bueschkens of Canada is well-known for his efforts as culinary ambassador for the World Association of Cooks Societies (WACS). "This symposium was important because we could discuss the changes coming to the industry, and we got views from around the world," says Bueschkens. "The biggest change in the future will be the adaptation of our cuisine to Far Eastern cooking, with its fresh ingredients, light seasonings and stir-fry preparation. People are becoming more nutrition-conscious, and this style of food preparation will become more appealing," he says.

Many of those attending the conference were apprentices who hoped to grab some gems of wisdom from the master chefs. The symposium was an important educational opportunity for these aspiring culinarians, says Bueschkens. "Young culinarians have much better opportunities than we had. People are eating out more because they have more leisure time and take more vacations. They have more chances to practice their craft," says Bueschkens.

Keith Keogh, the ACF's Southeastern regional vice president, was the moderator and coordinator of the event. Keogh also serves as team manager of the 1992 Culinary Team USA. Keogh says the event was "a unique opportunity to interface with some of the world's most influential chefs."

New poster breaks language barriers

Restaurateurs who encounter language problems at their establishments may be interested in a new poster designed exclusively for restaurants.

"Spanish/English for the Restaurant" is a 17-by-24-inch poster showing translations of more than 400 words and phrases for meals, foods, beverages, cooking methods, table settings, cleaning procedures, janitorial equipment, kitchen appliances, and verbal exchanges between managers and customers. The poster is designed to facilitate communication in either English or Spanish.

Printed on coated paper, the poster can be put in areas of interaction between customers and employees, and in places where employees talk to one another.

Each poster is available for $9.95 (California residents add sales tax), plus $2.00 for shipping and handling, from Translation Posters (specify Restaurant Poster), P.O. Box 1745(R), Lucerne Valley, CA 92356. For more information, call (619) 248-9018.

The benefits of saying "no"

Just by accurately answering "no" to three health questions, National Restaurant Association members and their employees under 55 (who work at least 30 hours per week) can enjoy the benefits of the Group Term Life Insurance Plan. Spouses of members and employees are also eligible, if they meet the same requirements.

Plan benefits include complete life insurance protection at a low cost, and rates are reduced even further for nonsmokers. Members may choose either the $50,000 or the $30,000 plan.

To find out about the three questions and for more complete information, call plan administrator Albert H. Wohlers & Co. at (800) 323-2106 or (708) 803-3100, or write to 1440 N. Northwest Highway, Park Ridge, IL 60068.

California restaurants are conserving water

In response to drought conditions, many California restaurateurs are actively taking steps to conserve water. Serving water to patrons only upon request is the most popular strategy. In such hard-stricken areas as the Central Coast, stronger measures are being taken, including the use of low-flush toilets, faucet flow restrictors, low-use dishmachines, recycling of "gray water," switching to disposables, and replacing plants with landscaping that requires no water.

If water allocation problems persist, operators may have to consider even more measures, including curtailing operating hours, charging for glasses of water and restricting restrooms to customers only. Drought veterans of the Bay area and Central Coast emphasize, however, that there is a limit to how far they can reduce water consumption without conflicting with sanitation requirements.

The California Restaurant Association is helping restaurateurs with water-saving strategies. A special report entitled *Conservation Guidelines: Saving Water and Energy in Restaurants* lists tips for saving water in every area of the operation. The report is free for the asking. Contact the California Restaurant Association at (800) 794-4272 or (213) 384-1200.

Soviet hospitality delegates visit Florida

A delegation of 17 top Soviet hotel and hospitality personnel sent by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev has been visiting South Florida for a condensed hospitality course at Nova University. As part of their trip, the delegation recently visited Grove Calloway's Adventure Bar & Grill in Coconut Grove, Florida, for hands-on experience on what makes an American restaurant tick.

Soviet hoteliers discuss restaurant development with Ground Up Associates management.

At Grove Calloway's, personnel from Ground Up Associates, the restaurant's management company, discussed inventory, scheduling and other hospitality topics with the Soviet delegation. "We're flattered to have had this unique opportunity," says Bob Green, president of Ground Up Associates. "They were so receptive to our methods that we are presently exploring the possibility of visiting the

(continued)

BOARDROOM

Hurst addresses food editors

Association president Michael E. Hurst traveled to Dallas last month to deliver a "state of the industry" address to a meeting of food editors, writers and broadcasters from across the country.

Attending the annual International Food Media Conference were approximately 120 journalists from national and regional media outlets, including the *Houston Chronicle*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, the *Baltimore Sun*, the *Orange County Register*, the *Dallas Morning News*, *Prevention* magazine, New York's WCBS radio and ABC-TV's "Home" show.

Hurst's presentation featured seven segments, each focusing on a different aspect of foodservice, and each included association statistics that had never before been released. The focus of his talk, entitled "Is the Golden Age of Fine Dining Over?," centered on industry reaction and adaptation during the current recession.

"The golden age of dining out is not over," Hurst told his audience. "Fine-dining establishments, although declining in number, will continue to meet the demands of people celebrating special occasions, entertaining important guests or merely seeking fine food.

"In another sense, too, the golden age continues in the many restaurants that are changing to more casual concepts. By changing menu mix, service and ambience to provide less elaborate meals in less formal surroundings at lower prices, operators are broadening their appeal."

Other topics addressed by Hurst included nutrition among major fast food chains, service in restaurants, the association's menu analysis, nonsmoking sections, children in restaurants and alcoholic-beverage consumption.

On the first evening of the conference, the food journalists were treated to a spectacular "Taste of Dallas" reception and dinner, hosted by the National Restaurant Association. Southwestern and Tex-Mex dishes were served by top Dallas establishments including Actuelle, Baby Routh, Blue Mesa Grill, Brazos, Cafe Margaux, The Conservatory, Dakota's, The French Room, Jennivine, L'Entrecote, Mia's Tex-Mex, The Mansion on Turtle Creek, Monte Carlo, Quadrangle Grille, Routh Street Cafe and Sfuzzi. The recipe that follows is just one of the many standout dishes that were featured at the "Taste of Dallas" reception.

—Anne Papa Curtis

WAHALOTE PARSNIP ENCHILADAS WITH OVEN-DRIED CRANBERRY SERRANO SALSA

Yield: 12 enchiladas

Ingredients:

For the enchiladas

4 ozs. canola oil
1 yellow onion, finely diced
2 poblanos, roasted, peeled and diced
1 cup parsnips, roasted and diced
1 Tbs. garlic, roasted
2 ozs. ancho-quajillo paste
12 ozs. turkey breast, grilled and diced
6 ozs. Chihuahua cheese, grated
2 ozs. goat cheese
3 Tbs. cilantro, chopped
12 corn tortillas

For the salsa

1 cup cranberries, oven-dried
2 serrano peppers, minced
1 cup pears, peeled and pureed
1 Tbs. cilantro, chopped
2 ozs. chardonnay
1 Tbs. onion, diced
2 ozs. turkey stock
1 Tbs. lime juice

Method:

For the enchiladas

Heat 1 ounce of the oil in a saucepan. Saute onions and poblano peppers until onions are transparent. Transfer to mixing bowl. Mix parsnip, ancho-quajillo paste, garlic, cilantro and both cheeses. Season turkey breast with salt and pepper, and grill until medium. Dice and mix with all other ingredients. Separate mixture into 12 equal portions.

In a saucepan, heat remaining oil at approximately 350° F. Submerge corn tortillas one at a time for approximately 3 seconds. Take out of hot oil and let drain on paper towels to absorb excess oil. Coat tortillas with ancho-quajillo paste. Lay out on a sheet tray and roll equal parts of turkey mixture in each tortilla. Sprinkle grated Chihuahua cheese on top and set aside until ready to serve.

For the salsa

Peel pears and puree in a blender with the chardonnay. Pour into a saucepan, add remaining ingredients and bring to a boil. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Serve at room temperature with enchiladas.

—Courtesy of Baby Routh

Soviet Union on a consulting basis for various properties."

The stop at Grove Calloway's was one of a series of stops at area restaurant and hotel facilities that have conducted seminars on procedures such as front desk operations, marketing and housekeeping. The Hospitality School of Nova University, which is hosting the delegation, condensed a six-month program into just a few weeks to meet the Soviet delegation's time constraints.

Saving a choking victim gets cheaper

The price of a video outlining the Heimlich Maneuver for helping choking victims has been lowered for members of the foodservice industry.

As a result of the many calls received in response to the recent article "The Heimlich Maneuver: Part of a New Standard of Service?" (see February ***Restaurants USA***), AIMS Media has lowered the price of its video entitled *The Heimlich Maneuver: How to Save a Choking Victim* to $79.95 for members of the foodservice industry.

In addition, quantity discounts and rentals of the video are available. For more information, contact AIMS Media at (800) 367-2467 or (818) 785-4111. Ask for tape 9712.

Address your comments about ***Restaurants USA*** and current foodservice issues to: ***Restaurants USA*** Feedback, National Restaurant Association, 1200 17th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. Submissions for publication may be edited for length.

Symposium informs restaurateurs about ADA

More than 120 foodservice industry members converged on Washington DC on March 7 for the National Restaurant Association's symposium on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to learn what the new law has in store for their businesses.

The law, signed by President Bush last July, will require most restaurants to make their services accessible as of January 26, 1992, to persons with disabilities and will prohibit job discrimination as of July 26, 1992, on the basis of a disability.

In late February, the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) proposed regulations that stipulate how ADA will affect restaurants and other public places.

Concerns aired

With the proposed rules barely one week old at the time of the symposium, operators, managers, architects and others in attendance had a forum for airing their concerns about the law's well-intended but vague requirements.

Attendees peppered John Wodatch of the Justice Department and Naomi Levin of EEOC, the chief authors of the proposed regulations, with questions about exactly how the new law will affect restaurant operations.

For example, John Curry, director of facilities for Bob Evans Farms in Columbus, Ohio, voiced the concerns of multi-unit operators about potential conflicts between ADA's federal accessibility requirements and the requirements of state and local building codes. Ted Papit, president of Unigate Restaurants in Dallas, asked for guidance on defining the essential and the nonessential functions of a job, to avoid unintended discrimination.

On these and many other points, regulators Wodatch and Levin were unable to give definite answers. Instead, the regulators explained that their agencies will enforce the law on a case-by-case basis, a policy the National Restaurant Association fears could lead to a sharp increase in lawsuits.

John Wodatch of the Department of Justice (standing) answers questions from (left to right) Tom Daly (Hilton Hotels), Ralph Brennan (Mr. B's) and John Curry (Bob Evans Farms) about ADA's accessibility requirements.

Marriott's James DeLuigi questions regulators about ADA's impact on foodservice.

Photos by Sonny Odom

Naomi Levin of EEOC attempts to explain ADA's employment rules. Levin: "There's simply no way to make this crystal clear."

"I know you don't like answers like 'It depends,' " said Levin, "but that's how it has to be, since we will determine each case on its own merits. There's simply no way to make this crystal clear."

Strategies for compliance offered

Participants also talked strategy with employment and engineering experts about how to best prepare for ADA's requirements.

"I strongly recommend that you start bringing your establishments into compliance with the law now," warned employment-law specialist Betty Southard Murphy. "The sooner you review your restaurant operations the better."

Murphy, who has served both as chief of the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division and as chairman of the National Labor Relations Board, advised operators to discuss ADA's hiring requirements with managers and to make detailed job descriptions specifying the essential functions of a job before beginning to recruit employees.

Mark Pitzer from the Internal Revenue Service told operators about tax incentives—up to a $5,000 tax credit and a $15,000 deduction per taxable year—available to help businesses pay for renovations to existing buildings made to accommodate workers or customers with disabilities.

Jean Mahoney of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, an independent federal agency charged with promoting employment of disabled workers, urged operators also to take advantage of organizations that can help recruit qualified persons with disabilities. Mahoney recommended contacting the appropriate state agencies via the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation at (202) 638-4634, and she recommended calling the President's Committee's own Job Accommodation Network at (800) JAN-7234 for advice.

—Andrew McLauchlin

DCROUNDUP

□ *Small-business exemption correction pending.* With the federal minimum wage increasing from $3.80 to $4.25 on April 1, the National Restaurant Association and other business groups have turned up the heat on a yearlong lobbying campaign to restore an ironclad exemption for small businesses from the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

When Congress amended the FLSA in 1989, lawmakers expanded the small-business exemption to include most businesses that gross less than $500,000 a year. In the process, however, Congress inadvertently applied the FLSA to any employee who engages in interstate commerce—even if he or she works for a business that grosses less than $500,000.

As this issue of ***Restaurants USA*** went to press, 40 senators had cosponsored the Senate version of the exemption (S. 349), and 52 representatives had signed on in support of the House version of the bill (H.R. 1237). The association was pressing for a vote on the legislation before the end of March.

□ *Maximum teen-labor penalties increased.* The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) formally announced February 28 that as of March 1, it will consider assessing civil penalties of up to $10,000 per violation per employee for particularly serious violations of federal teen-employment regulations.

A 1990 amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act increased the maximum penalty from $1,000 to $10,000. According to the law, the $10,000 maximum applies to violations occurring on and after November 5, 1990. Fines assessed by DOL on violations that happened before November 5, 1990, will continue to reflect the previous $1,000 maximum.

DOL says it will take into account the size of the firm and the seriousness of violations in determining the amount of civil penalties to assess.

□ *Don't overpay alcohol-inventory tax.* In a March 4 letter to the National Restaurant Association, the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) urged restaurants that sell alcohol not to pay too much in federal alcohol-inventory taxes.

Under a provision of last year's budget bill, Congress required restaurants, bars and other alcohol sellers to pay taxes on the alcohol they had in stock on January 1, 1991. The tax must be paid by June 28.

BATF says many alcohol sellers have failed to claim available exemptions and tax credits. Businesses are exempt if their entire stock of distilled spirits, wine and beer totaled fewer than 500 gallons on January 1. All businesses with inventories of more than 500 gallons can offset their tax bill with credits. For more information, contact BATF's Tax Processing Center at (513) 684-6580.

New ideas about nutrition

The newly released third edition of the 1990 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* represents a bold step forward in the area of public health. The revised guidelines differ from earlier versions in that they give more direction and more food-specific examples than in the past.

Overall, the most significant change introduced in the 1990 guidelines is the switch to a more positive presentation. Rather than noting foods to avoid, the guidelines now include lists of foods to choose or use sparingly when following a healthy diet. Also, the recommendations are more total-diet oriented, emphasizing balance and moderation.

For foodservice operators, the specific nature of the new dietary guidelines makes it easier to put healthy choices on the menu. With a few simple changes or additions, items can be tailored to meet the criteria. Listed are the seven recommended guidelines, followed by ways in which foodservice operators can adapt them:

1. Eat a variety of foods.
2. Maintain healthy weight.
3. Choose a diet low in fat, saturated fat and cholesterol.
4. Choose a diet with plenty of vegetables, fruits and grain products.
5. Use sugars only in moderation.
6. Use salt and sodium in moderation.
7. If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

Foodservice operators should strive to provide a wide variety of foods on their menus. Of particular importance to restaurant patrons following the dietary guidelines are the vegetable, fruit and bread groups that will make up the bulk of their meal. These foods also add much-needed fiber to the diet. The guidelines recommend that the average adult eat at least three servings of vegetables and two servings of fruit a day.

Sugar and salt are other concerns. According to a National Restaurant Association survey, more than 60 percent of nutritionally committed patrons wish that restaurants offered menu items cooked without salt.

Although the dietary guidelines do not give any specific recommendations for sodium, the National Academy of Sciences suggests that Americans take in no more than 2,400 milligrams of sodium a day (about a teaspoonful of table salt). Current consumption rates range anywhere from 3,000 to 6,000 milligrams per day.

With the exception of yeast breads, salt can be eliminated from almost all recipes without altering texture, appearance and other physical properties. Operators trying to cut down on the amount of salt they use should start out very gradually. Reduce the amount of salt used by half and then slowly decrease the amount until it is eliminated. Since salt occurs naturally in food, getting enough salt in the diet is not a problem.

In addition to cooking without salt, operators can avoid salty processed foods. Homemade stocks, soups, sauces and gravies are much lower in sodium than their canned or powdered counterparts. Other ways to satisfy patrons who want to reduce their salt intake are: Season foods with fresh or dried herbs and spices; use flavored vinegars; avoid high-sodium foods such as cured meats, pickled foods and canned goods; and use reduced-sodium products for items like soy sauce, broths and soups.

The empty calories provided by sugar are another cause for concern. Those interested in following a healthy diet will want to avoid excessive intakes of refined sugar, which can lead to tooth decay and obesity.

Chefs often add sugar unnecessarily to soups, stews and sauces. In most cases, this sugar can be significantly reduced, if not cut out completely, without sacrificing the quality of the recipe. In other cases, spices that enhance sweetness can be used to replace sugar. Cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, ginger, anise, fennel and mint are among the "sweet" spices For meats, fruit-based chutneys and spreads with no added sugar can easily be substituted for sugary glazes and sauces.

Cooks who wish to reduce the sugar in desserts and baked goods can offer items naturally sweetened with fruit. Fruit-based tarts, sorbets, cobblers and custards can be prepared with little added sugar and no loss in flavor. For a simple, refreshing dessert, serve fresh or juice-packed canned fruit or fruit salad. As a stand-in for sugar-laden cakes and pies, try offering quick breads and muffins flavored with fruits and spices. Often the sugar called for in a rich dessert recipe may be cut by one-quarter to one-third without affecting the product. With a little experimentation, the foodservice operator can reduce the sugar in many high-calorie desserts.

Using artificial sweeteners as an alternative sweetening agent is another option for foodservice operations catering to the health-conscious. Saccharine, aspartame (Nutrasweet) or the recently approved acesulfame-K (Sunette) are widely available artificial sweeteners. When using these sweeteners in recipes, cooks should test the product first, since some sweeteners may leave a bitter or metallic aftertaste. Also, aspartame is unable to withstand high temperatures, so it has limited applications. One of the best ways to offer sugar substitutes is to provide them to patrons who wish to use them in place of table sugar.

By reading labels, foodservice operators can become aware of foods that contain hidden sugars. These sugars may appear in the form of honey, syrup, glucose, dextrose, fructose, corn sweetener, molasses and fruit-juice concentrate.

The National Restaurant Association's publication *A Nutrition Guide for the Restaurateur* offers guidance for menu modification. Methods of delivering nutrition information to patrons are outlined in the association's *Ingredients and Nutrition Information* booklet. These publications can be purchased by calling (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960.

For a single free copy of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, write to the Consumer Information Center, Department 514-X, Pueblo, CO 81009.

—Diane Welland, R.D.

A taste of adventure

While waiting tables during high school, Carolyn Claycomb wished she were in the back of the house preparing food instead of in the front of the house serving it. Traveling to Europe with her husband, Claycomb's interest in food was fed further by all the culinary delights she sampled in various countries. This interest led her to become a chef and to open Carolyn's restaurant a year and a half ago in Columbus, Ohio.

Claycomb's knowledge of food and cooking has changed and evolved, but her main philosophy of cooking has not. "Food is meant to be enjoyed and to be fun. I never take it so seriously that I can't have fun with it. I try not to overanalyze food, because it should be a source of pleasure," she says.

Part of Claycomb's fun with food comes from changing the menu daily to focus on whatever style of cooking has caught her fancy at the moment. One thing that does not change is her use of seasonal, fresh ingredients in her contemporary American cuisine.

"I change the menu every single day, but it is always contemporary. I enjoy so many different kinds of cuisine—I like dealing with all kinds of ethnic food. I'll get on a kick about some kind of food for a while because I'm excited by the cuisine, and that will be reflected on the menu," she says.

Focusing on the use of fresh, high-quality, seasonal ingredients saves her money, she says, because there is less waste. "I use everything. I find ways of using scraps in other dishes to stretch out the food. By buying seasonal foods, I save money because they are readily available and thus less costly," she says. To save money, Claycomb recommends that chefs experiment with local produce and less expensive cuts of meat to make appetizing and low-cost entrees.

Carolyn Claycomb

Carolyn's is in a 100-year-old building in the German Village area of Columbus. Although the building is charming, its advanced age can make for high operating costs. Claycomb says that taking good care of her equipment and having it serviced regularly helps to rein in costs.

The upscale restaurant's decor is modern except for a huge antique carved wooden bar that, with the exception of Claycomb's food, is the focal point of the restaurant.

Claycomb says that she doesn't think her method of cooking will ever settle down to just one style. "I like experimenting and changing too much to just cook in one style," she says. She does think that over time restaurants will change by "swinging back from the interest in homestyle cooking. I think customers are finally going to realize that 'Gee, this really is homestyle food and I can get this at home, so why am I here?' When they are eating out, people will want to have food that they can't have at home, maybe because the ingredients are hard to come by or because they don't know how to cook in that particular style. Then cooking will go back to uniqueness and adventure." And when the next wave of customer insurrection begins, Claycomb will most likely be among the intrepid culinary leaders who are satisfying patrons with a taste of adventure.

—Jennifer Batty

If you would like to be featured in this column, write to Jennifer Batty, ***Restaurants USA,*** 1200 17th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036.

PHYLLO NEST FILLED WITH SMOKED SHELLFISH AND SUN-DRIED TOMATO/ROASTED GARLIC SAUCE

Serves 8

Ingredients:
- 4 sheets phyllo pastry
- 2 lbs. smoked shellfish (Claycomb uses a mixture of shrimp, scallops and mussels)
- Unsalted butter, melted (as needed)
- 3 Tbs. dried bread crumbs
- 1 head garlic
- 2 ozs. sun-dried tomatoes, rinsed
- 2 cups heavy cream
- ½ cup cider vinegar
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 1 tspn. unsalted butter
- 1 shallot, chopped
- 4 ozs. butter
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

For phyllo nests

To prepare phyllo nests, cut each sheet of phyllo into 8 squares. Lightly brush 8 ovenproof cups with melted butter. Brush 1 phyllo square with melted butter. Sprinkle with bread crumbs. Place in a prepared cup. Brush and stack 3 more squares of phyllo into the cup. Prepare 7 more phyllo nests in the same manner. Bake at 350°F for 10 minutes, or until phyllo is golden. Remove nests from cups.

For pastry filling

To prepare filling, place garlic in a 350°F oven and bake for 45 minutes, or until soft. Squeeze pulp from garlic head. Place in food processor with the sun-dried tomatoes and process until finely chopped.

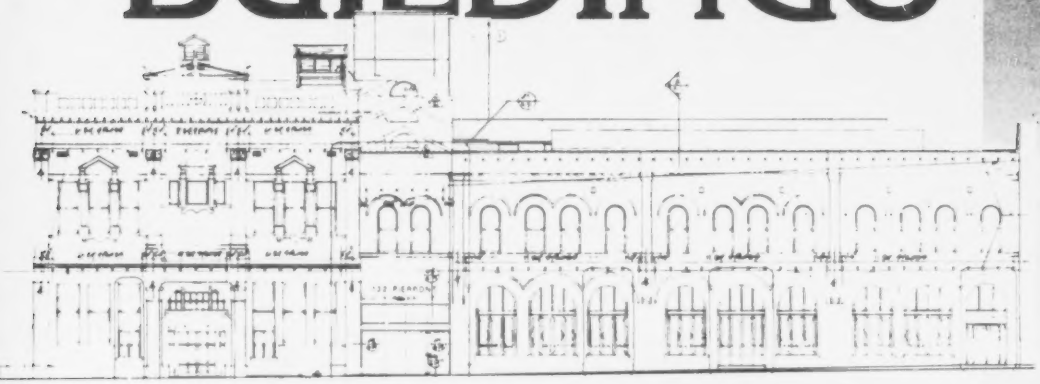
Over low heat, reduce cream to 1 cup. Saute shallot in 1 teaspoon of butter. Add vinegar and wine. Add reduced cream. Simmer 5 minutes. Strain. Gradually whisk in butter. Add the sun-dried tomato-garlic mixture to the sauce. Season with salt and black pepper to taste.

Stir the smoked shellfish into the sauce. Place mixture in the prepared phyllo nests. Serve immediately.

—Courtesy of Carolyn Claycomb

Nutritional analysis per serving: 557 calories, 28 grams protein, 27 grams carbohydrate, 39 grams fat, 720 mg. sodium, 213 mg. cholesterol

RESTAURANTS IN HISTORIC BUILDINGS



HISTORY FLAVORS THESE EATING PLACES

by Mary Kincaid

Nothing makes a stronger design statement than opening a restaurant in a historic building.

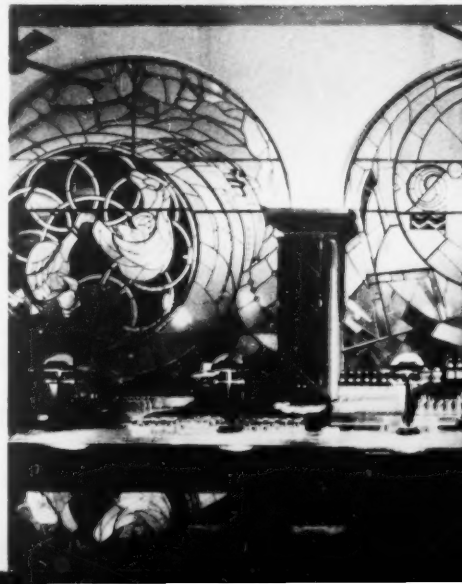
A landmark location gives patrons a reason to try a restaurant, regardless of what is known about the establishment. "You can depend on the food to bring people back to a restaurant the second time, but it is the design that invites them in and sets an agreeable mood the first time," says architect M. Louis Ulrich of FFKR Architects/Planners in Salt Lake City.

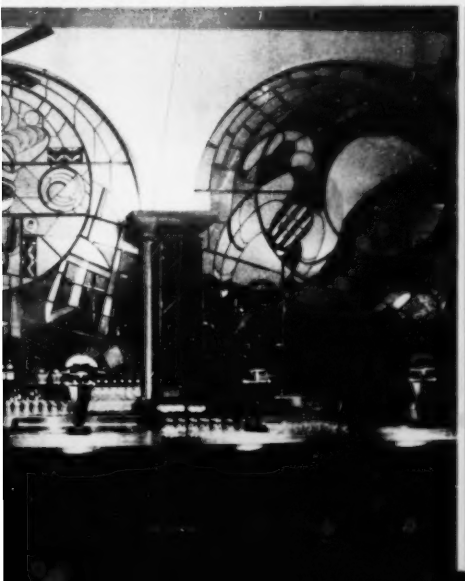
In addition, a 20 percent tax credit for rehabilitating a historic site brings a gleam to the eyes of some restaurant investors as they envision renovating a forlorn structure into a new restaurant. Carrying out such a transformation, however, and qualifying for registration with the National Trust for Historic Preservation in order to get a tax break, requires time, research, skillful design, money, paperwork, paperwork and paperwork. In Salt Lake City, in Cleveland and in Lexington, Kentucky, three such efforts have attracted an appreciative clientele and community praise.

A high school turned trattoria

The company Gastronomy, Inc., was responsible for transforming the building that housed Salt Lake City's first high school into the Cafe Pierpont and the Baci Club and Trattoria, now one of the most popular dining spots in Utah's capital city. By the time owners John Williams, Tom Guinney, Thomas Sieg and Marco Schienz tackled the 1897 Pierpont Building (which now houses the restaurant, club and cafe) as a rehab project in a historic district, they had already honed their skills on several previous rehabs-into-restaurants, all of which are now thriving. The owners decided to turn this historic spot into an Italian trattoria and to rent the upper floors for office space.

Things went well at first. First Security Bank had confidence in Gastronomy's track record with rehabilitations, and historical research seemed to have produced the necessary documentation for a historic site. But the initial bid for registration with the National Trust for Historic Preservation failed, in spite of the pages of architectural feature documentation,





The Baci Club and Trattoria and the Cafe Pierpont are located in a former Salt Lake City high school building.

Groined arches and a back-lit glass clock impress first-time diners at the Trattoria.

Colorful suspended glass panels separate the bar and dining areas.

Photos by Douglas Kahn

At Cleveland's Haymarket Restaurant, in the art deco Landmark Office Tower, bar patrons may be seated in a former bank vault.

photos and history submitted. Gastronomy appealed, going to Washington DC a second time, after six months of additional research to locate examples of registered structures with similar characteristics. They won the appeal, agreeing to make some window changes. In June 1986 the building was registered, and the $2.7 million restoration began. But not without considerable effort.

Co-owner John Williams had visited Italy, where the food, wine, seductive architecture and art tempted him to bring Italian ambience to Salt Lake City. Confident that the American craze for Italian clothes, cars, furniture and pasta would make an Italian restaurant work, Williams took key staff members from Gastronomy on a second Italian trip to evaluate what could best be adapted in Salt Lake City. Following that, trips to Italian restaurants in Chicago and on both coasts helped them to gauge what items would be most likely to appeal to American taste buds. For example, the group determined that Americans prefer more sauce on their pasta than Italians do, and Williams was perfectly willing to accommodate. "It's not our job to educate the clientele, but to please them," Williams says.

But creating an Italian trattoria from the print shop, sheet-metal shop and warehouse that had successively occupied the former high school building posed a series of problems. A vast, awkward cavern confronted the owners and the architect.

"Our biggest problem was to make the tall interior space interesting," says architect Ulrich. Floor-to-ceiling columns interfered with a graceful use of the space. But Ulrich solved that problem by designing groined arches, based on the columns, that curve upward to create an enchanting resemblance to Northern Italian ceilings.

To make the battered and warped warehouse floor reflect an Italian mood, the firm used a poured terrazzo floor.

To bring people all the way in to the 375-seat restaurant and club, a central staircase was added, creating more interest. Topped by a back-lit, etched colored-glass clock that is nine feet in diameter, the stairs not only present patrons with an eye-catching conversation piece, but they also lead adventurous patrons up to a new mezzanine where artwork both there and below gives diners a piquant reward for the eyes.

The coatrack problem

Having already drawn customers in with the fascinating ceiling and staircase, Ulrich faced another, more practical, challenge: "Coats create a real design problem with restaurants," says Ulrich. Fortunately, Ulrich found a Utah manufacturer to extend the height of the 16 imported Italian lamps, modifying them to hold coatracks. At an eight-foot level, the lamps now cast a pleasant glow on diners, who can also eye their wraps.

When the weather warms, those choosing to dine alfresco find a perfect spot on a long deck transformed from the former loading dock; it's another eyesore made appealing.

A magical solution was used to solve a restaurant problem that is special to Utah, where by law a restaurant's bar area must be separated from the main dining space. To solve this design challenge, graphic designer Rob Magiera and glass artist William Lettig were commissioned, and with three others they spent six

Photos by Mort Tucker

months sandblasting, beveling and leading three 13-foot glass panels. Suspended in such a way that they reflect and refract light, the panels separate teetotaling diners from legal drinkers.

One of the most attention-getting maneuvers in the Baci Trattoria success story was the use of the neighboring Phillips Gallery as a liaison between regional artists, the architect and the owners. From names suggested by gallery director Bonnie Phillips, Ulrich and Williams selected seven artists, including painters, a ceramist and a graphic artist, who collaborated on an Italian-themed, 40-foot, mixed-media mural. Merging skills and artistic personalities to create an eye-catching melange of figures, trompe l'oeil arches and still life brought useful publicity to the artists and Baci Trattoria.

A Cleveland classic

Cleveland diners are now able to enjoy a drink within the solid surroundings of a bank vault at the Haymarket Restaurant in downtown Cleveland. The owners of the Haymarket revamped a site within Landmark Office Tower, which was listed with the Register of Historic Places. Because of the building's status, some special paperwork had to be submitted to allow for the revamping.

Submitting an application for the National Register of Historic Places brought no pain to Don Klier, then manager of the Haymarket Restaurant. By hiring a consulting firm specializing in such application work, the owners and the architect saved time and effort. "We had only to send Benjamin D. Rickey & Co. the architectural documentation and sketches, adding some information by phone, so we had no problems there," recalls project architect Alan Fodor of Herman Galvin Gibans, Inc.

Letting someone else take care of the application was a wise move, because review bodies in Cleveland could easily overwhelm a neophyte hoping to make use of a historic building. In addition to approval from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the State Historic Preservation Office, projects in Cleveland may face a design review board in a Public Land Protected District, the Fine Arts Advisory Committee of the City Planning Commission and the Cleveland Landmarks Commission. An unwary owner could encounter a delay as long as six months. On the other hand, some of the advice from a series of reviewers might prove highly valuable. If no public money is involved in a project, the routine is shortened.

Landmark Office Tower, an art deco building, stands as a downtown centerpiece, its exterior virtually unaltered since construction in the 1920s. The building even includes its original metal window surrounds.

Trouble arose, though, when time came to make holes in the walls to install ventilation. This part of the structure had been occupied by Midland Bank. "We planned to retain the vault area as the bar, keeping steel security boxes in place," says architect Fodor. "But when demolition began to make ventilation holes, we found concrete and steel-plate walls 18 inches thick—very difficult to get through," recalls Fodor.

Ceilings posed another problem: They were too low. To manage air-duct space and still allow headroom, the Haymarket renovation crew had to use special flattened ducts, covered by acoustic panels and drywall. Setbacks during ventilation, electrical and plumbing procedures all contributed to making this a million-dollar project.

A happy discovery in the renovation of the old building came during the researching of old drawings that revealed forgotten doorfront grills. Unearthing the buried treasures and cleaning the exquisite bronze grills made them into restaurant highlights. The grills are now screens dividing two of the three dining areas. Dark wood paneling on the restaurant's perimeter walls sets off the many brass, bronze and copper antique materials saved from the original structure. Spotlighted against the wall, they complement screens and the antique railing rimming the raised dining area. Clients tread on dark red carpeting to reach tables where they savor, among other presentations, veal rollatini, a signature dish on the Continental menu.

Opened in 1988, the Haymarket attracted downtown shoppers and office workers at lunch and early cocktail time. But foot traffic diminishes shortly after five in downtown Cleveland. Because of the historic-building designation, the Haymarket is not allowed to use bold signage that would announce its presence to motorists whizzing past.

Initially, this requirement for low-key signage was a problem. "The gold-leaf sign on our front window just failed to attract people," says Don Klier. "For months we waited for dinner clientele. Our problem vanished when the new mall and the Ritz-Carlton opened in adjacent buildings, bringing a surge of business at dinnertime."

These openings and increased print advertising have overcome the problems of the Haymarket's discreet signage. Evening parking, another common problem in downtown Cleveland, has presented no difficulty since the Haymarket began offering valet parking in the building's garage after nine-to-five workers have cleared out the garage each day.

A Lexington landmark

At Dudley's Restaurant, the anchor

spot in Lexington, Kentucky's Dudley Square, tourists and townspeople enjoy celebrating special occasions. The Italian architectural style, the 1881 construction and the rich history that included a founder of the Daughters of the American Revolution, assured the former Dudley School a place in the National Register.

Debbie Long and John Sheay happened along just as the $1 million renovation project was nearing completion as a shopping center. Needing an alluring restaurant as anchor for Dudley Square, former owner and developer Richard Hurley agreed to lease space to Long and Sheay.

"We started on a shoestring," Long recalls, "and we had to borrow money and labor to make it work. We really had no operating capital, and it's amazing that we've survived, with only $42,000 to launch the restaurant."

Although John Sheay had restaurant management experience at a New York Hyatt, and both Sheay and Long had worked in Denver restaurants, their debut as owner-operators brought them a new viewpoint on business.

An early shock came during the job of transforming the basement into a kitchen. "It was like a catacomb!" says Long. Instead of venting through side walls, as they had planned, they were required to carry the ventilating and hood system up to the third-floor roof to meet health codes. Venting at the roof level, above 14-foot ceilings, made the project much costlier than they had expected. Ducts now run through the middle of the dining room, hugging the inside wall.

A second surprise to Sheay and Long was the amount of labor involved in making some unique bar tables. "We made a wonderful discovery in retrieving marble slabs from the school's former bathroom stalls," Long recalls. Long hours were involved in cutting 12 tabletops and making tables from the slabs themselves, with the help and guidance of hired carpenters.

The ½-inch-thick mirror mounted behind the bar took even more labor to prepare. The mirror and the solid-oak bar top took eight to ten hours a day for two-and-a-half weeks for them and a visiting relative to strip, refinish and install.

Getting the 100-seat dining room and bar ready for the 1981 opening happened only as the result of much love and labor donated by friends and family. Once the restaurant opened, labor costs, breakage, labor turnover and taxes meant more unexpected headaches. Having become enchanted with the old school building and having taken the courage to create a restaurant, Long and Sheay had expected to draw a breath of relief once the restaurant opened. Instead, they have faced the daily business struggles that all restaurateurs deal with.

One innovation that keeps Long content is a courtyard dining spot that owes its existence to the fact that the former school building had a schoolyard. Dudley's has used the space well, opening an outdoor dining area two years after opening. That step increased the spot's popularity and led other restaurants to open terraces. "Ours is the best, though," says Long, "since the courtyard is bordered by three huge 100-year-old tulip poplars that shade it. Those trees and the grass are very refreshing and beautiful." Beautiful as it is, that former schoolyard (which seats 60) brings added income only on the 45 days a year that are certain to be dry but not sizzling.

Dudley's Restaurant features the traditional in both decor and cuisine, and there is no attempt to re-create a schoolroom atmosphere in the two dining rooms. Customers enjoy fresh vegetables, seafood, pasta, steak and roast beef.

As a special ongoing feature, local artists display their work in changing exhibits. Because so many customers are involved in horse racing, a large donation of win pictures adorns the bar area.

The sounds of the winter heating system emerge from original clanking radiators, which seem to amuse clientele. Although carpeting covers the dining-room floors to mute such noise, the entryway's handsome maple flooring and stairway, as well as the beaded-board pine wainscoting, remind visitors of the former school's elegance.

Two sections of the building, 10 feet apart, feature an adaptation: doors that have been cut into walls, with a five-by-eight-foot glass atrium connecting them. The fact that plans for this change passed muster with the Bluegrass Trust, which oversees historic-building designations in Lexington, is due to the fact that the small nook is not prominent or easily seen from the street. Since exterior signage is not allowed, Dudley's features a lighted signboard on the corner of the lawn.

The rehab challenge

In the three cases above, lovely restaurants have emerged from the confines of a historic architectural site. It cannot be overstated, however, that such projects are a considerable challenge for both restaurateur and architect. According to David Evans of Ann Arbor, Michigan's architectural firm Quinn Evans Architects, which specializes in preservation work, a person considering a rehab project always faces a question: Is it worth the expense to save and adapt an old building to meet today's safety standards and fire codes?

Evans has seen a variety of snares during his 15 years of historic-renovation experience. He points out that owners often open a restaurant on the first floor of a historic building, planning upper floors for later renovation as office or living space. Unaware of the tight code requirements for such uses and for their separation from restaurant areas, owners learn too late that meeting such requirements can drive costs out of sight. Evans warns that codes and deed restrictions must be anticipated in the early planning stage. Of course, retaining original architectural details and conforming to historic use does not necessarily mean that contemporary design or alteration is forbidden.

On the positive side, rehabilitating an old structure brings countless advantages to the community, and rehabilitating a structure as a restaurant can reinforce historic pride in a particularly tasteful way. ❑

Mary Kincaid is a writer in Ann Arbor, Michigan

NOISE LEVELS IN RESTAURANTS

WHAT'S THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF SOUND?

by Julie Fintel

Stuart Armstrong

A businessperson hoping to close a deal probably would not take a client to a restaurant where patrons stand three deep at the bar, rock music is turned up loud and kitchen noises compete with the noise of customers talking, shouting and laughing. On the other hand, a young stockbroker seeking to unwind after a hectic week might seek out just such a restaurant. What's noisy and annoying to one person is lively and exciting to another. The restaurateur who wants to know whether to turn the volume up or down must take a look at the people who frequent the establishment and why they come there.

Noise in a restaurant seems to be an issue in judging restaurants these days. Restaurant critics are mentioning it when they write reviews. For example, in a review of New York City restaurants in *TRAVELER* magazine, restaurant critic Mimi Sheraton had high praise for TriBeCa Grill but called it "hectic and deafening." She had good words for the food at Ferrier, but she also mentioned "the unending din and elbow-to-elbow seating." She called two other new hot spots "insanely noisy."

Whether a restaurant is noisy or not should depend upon the concept of the restaurant, says designer Andrew Young of New York City. Noise is one of the elements that, combined with decor, food and service, give a restaurant a certain feel or mood. For example, restaurants seeking to convey the feel of a bistro or a pub intentionally allow the noise level to be high. But a restaurant designed as a cozy, intimate retreat takes steps to hold down the noise.

Hand in hand with the role noise plays in atmosphere goes the role of noise in retaining a certain clientele. Restaurants geared toward young people are designed to be full of vitality—and that may translate into a high decibel level. If the clientele is mostly businesspeople, the noise level must be low enough that patrons can talk business while having lunch or dinner.

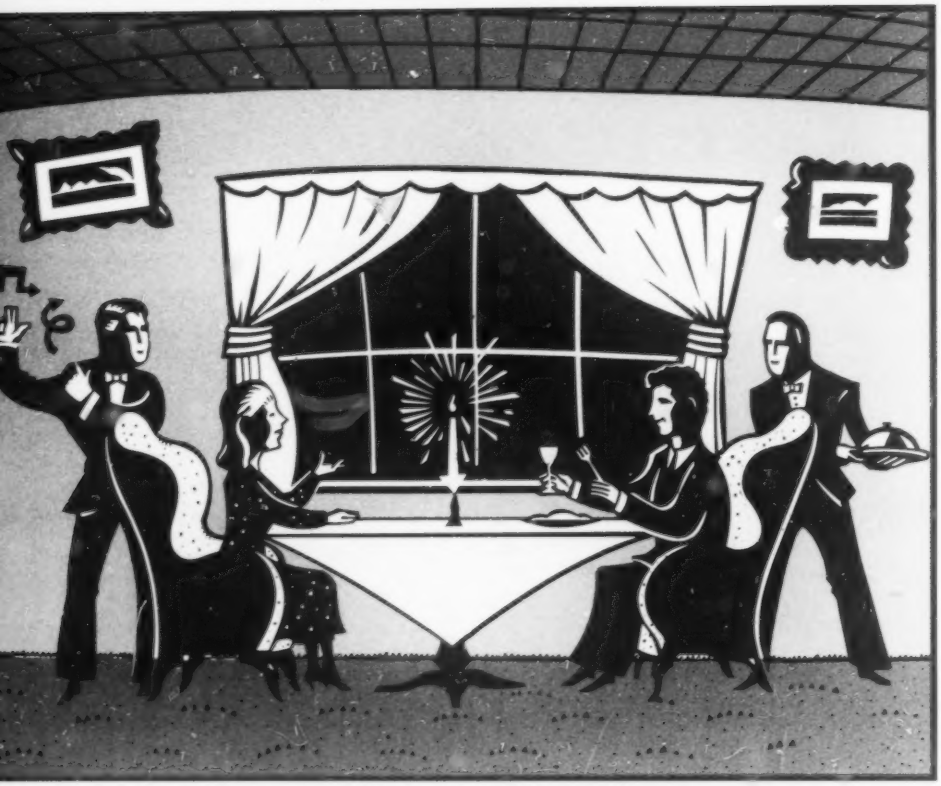
Adjusting the noise

Designer Young rehabilitated a restaurant (now called Beaches) in Palm Beach, Florida, that was not succeeding because the concept was not in tune with the market, which he described as "a very up crowd, a mix of young and old." As part of its change to a fun and funky place, the new restaurant adjusts the sound level of the music depending on the crowd it wants to attract. For example, the music is turned down at lunch and in the early evening, when an older clientele comes in. Later in the evening, to bring in the younger crowd, music volume is turned up.

Restaurant critic Sheraton says she has been monitoring noise in restaurants for the past seven or eight years, and she thinks that restaurants are getting noisier. When Sheraton goes out with her friends, they go to places where they can talk, she says. "But I don't like them dead either," she adds, "where you feel you have to whisper or else you will be overheard."

Where does noise in a restaurant come from? It comes from background music, conversations among customers, servers talking to each other, the clanging and clattering of dishes and silverware, and kitchen sounds such as exhaust fans and the banging of pots and pans. Once the sound is made, the way the interior is constructed will determine how the sound reverberates.

Hard surfaces make a restaurant noisier. Joan Vieweger, vice president of Perspectives/The Consulting Group, Inc., in Los Angeles, thinks the popular Mediterranean look, with



brick walls, tile floors and bare wooden tables, is one reason restaurants seem to be getting noisier.

High energy, high noise

Restaurant owners usually do not ask designers to create a "noisy restaurant," says Vieweger. Instead, they refer to an atmosphere of "high energy with lots of activity," she says. For some restaurateurs, a noisy atmosphere is the goal. Kevin Finch is the general manager of Border Grill in Santa Monica, which was voted the noisiest restaurant in the Los Angeles area by the *Los Angeles Times*. "Border Grill is a really casual, fun restaurant, and noise is a part of it," he says. Doug Roth, co-owner of Chicago's Bistro 110, adds, "People like places that are lively and upbeat; they make you feel good."

When restaurants begin to fill up, people begin to talk louder to be heard. So a full restaurant is often a noisy restaurant. People are attracted to restaurants that are crowded. The Border Grill may be one of the Los Angeles area's noisiest restaurants, but it is also one of the most popular, and part of the noise comes from people having a good time. "I like having too many people. If a restaurant is quiet, people ask, 'What's wrong?' " says Finch. The Border Grill even has a special party table built to seat 20, which Finch acknowledges can add to the noise when its occupants begin to loosen up.

At North Star Pub in New York City's South Street Seaport area, some customers have complained about the noise, but manager Deven Black doesn't intend to change anything. He explains that part of the problem comes from people crowded into the small area, speaking louder and louder to be heard. "I could reduce the number of customers," he says. "But that wouldn't be good business."

North Star Pub's decor also contributes to its noisiness. Built to resemble an English pub, it has bare wood tables, tile floors, 10-foot ceilings made of plank wood, and a bar where customers often stand to eat. Tablecloths and carpeting would cut down the noise, but it would also alter the pub-like atmosphere. Roth feels the same about tampering with the feel of his restaurant, Bistro 110. "We are a bistro, and people expect bistros to have hustle and bustle," he says, although he has added acoustical tile to the ceiling and put a few runners here and there on the bare wood floors to cut down on the noise somewhat.

Roth is also a believer in restaurants as theater. He thinks his French bistro environment helps transport people away from their workplace and the problems of the world.

Wolfgang Puck's latest restaurant, Eureka Restaurant & Brewery, in West Los Angeles, reflects the extroverted personality of the famous chef. The decor, designed by Puck's wife Barbara Lazaroff, uses high-tech materials in a neo-industrial style. The floors are slate, tables are bare wood, and a glass-brick wall separates the dining area from the bar. An open kitchen is responsible for the clanging of pots and pans, and the sounds of meats and fish sizzling on a grill mingle with the noises of the crowds. "If you want a romantic evening, we're not what you're looking for," says spokesperson Krestin Beaton. "We're fun and entertaining."

Carrying the idea of restaurants as theater to the extreme is another Los Angeles restaurant known for its high noise level—California Beach, a Japanese restaurant where earsplitting rock and roll is played and the sushi chefs lead cheers, clap along to the music, chug beers and yell raucous things in Japanese.

Besides adding to the atmosphere, noise sometimes has another function: It can be used to turn over tables more quickly. Diners are less likely to linger after a meal if the noise makes it difficult to talk.

Some like it quiet

Newman's La Bonne Auberge customers say the Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, restaurant is one of the quietest they have ever been in. To achieve the quiet, local designer Susan W. Welzien of S.W. Wells Design Associates put cushions on all the doors to keep them from slamming, put the kitchen in the rear and separated it from the dining area with a double wall. Welzien put the air compressors seven feet above the ceiling and moved the work area, which used to be in the middle of the dining room, to the back behind an insulated wall. In addition, the restaurant is carpeted, and it features an acoustically quiet ceiling. The waitstaff do their part by not talking to each other in the dining room, substituting hand signals in-

stead, and the kitchen workers do not yell in the kitchen.

Another restaurant known for its quiet is Notes, in the Sunset Marquis Hotel in West Hollywood, California. Paradoxically, a large part of the clientele of the hotel and restaurant are rock stars. The hotel was made famous by the rock band the Eagles in their song "Hotel California." "This is the home of rock and roll in California," says food and beverage director Giles Beeker. "Anybody who's anybody in the music industry stays here." Beeker says that when his famous clients dine, they want privacy. They need quiet because they often discuss business deals over a meal. Large Georgian wing chairs, loveseats for two, padded walls and a subdued color scheme give Notes a hushed, clubby atmosphere.

Carlucci's in Chicago, on the other hand, wanted an atmosphere that was casual but sophisticated—more on the side of liveliness than an inner sanctum. It was built in an old warehouse with a high ceiling—one large open space. But owner Joe Carlucci soon found he was losing customers because the restaurant was so noisy. "They would pull me aside and say, 'I loved your place—the atmosphere and the food—but I won't be back because it's too noisy. I can't do business here or talk to my family or friends.' " Carlucci put acoustical tile in the ceiling, moved the bar to the front (away from next to the dining room) and divided the open space into two dining areas. "I think people are becoming more sensitive to noise," Carlucci observes. "There needs to be some noise for liveliness and excitement, but too much noise becomes intrusive."

Turning down the sound

The more hard surfaces you have in your restaurant, the more noise you'll have. "Sound control is simple," says designer Adam Tihany of New York City. "Sound is created by the sound waves bouncing from surface to surface. So if you want it to be quieter, have as many soft and absorbing surfaces as possible, so the sound will stop bouncing."

Here are some ways to make your restaurant more acoustically comfortable if it is now noisier than you would like.

Draperies, upholstery, carpeting, rugs, tablecloths and padding underneath the cloths are some easy additions that soften sound. Use walls for soundproofing by covering them with padded fabric. Even artwork on canvas absorbs some of the sound. Tapestries are effective, too. Joan Vieweger, vice president of Perspectives/The Consulting Group, Inc., in Los Angeles, has used tapestries made of special sound-absorbing material like that used in recording studios. Large areas of glass act as reflectors of sound. Use draperies on windows or counter the effects of glass with soft surfaces elsewhere.

Installing acoustical tile in the ceiling is probably the most effective way to dampen sound, since the ceiling is usually the room's largest surface. Tiles can be put above a ceiling's surface as well as below.

Because the bar is almost always the noisiest area in a restaurant, keeping it away from the main dining area, or putting up insulated walls between the bar and the rest of the restaurant, can keep the noise from bothering diners.

Another way to cut the volume is to not encourage large parties or to separate them from the other diners. If you don't have an area set aside for large groups, consider movable partitions.

If people request a quiet table, don't put them near a large party or near the kitchen or service area.

Set a quiet mood for your restaurant with colors and lighting. Tihany says lighting is an underutilized method of bringing quiet to a restaurant. "Have you ever noticed," he asks, "that when the lights go down, people start to speak lower?"

Instruct the service staff to be more quiet. Servers should not yell to each other or to the cooks in the kitchen. They should refrain from letting the dishes and silverware bang against each other.

Insulate walls that separate the kitchen from the dining room with sound-absorbing material. Install a sound-absorbing ceiling in the kitchen, too. Dishwashers and ventilation fans should be mounted in such a way that they don't vibrate and cause excess noise.

Place tables farther apart. Diners seated close to other diners sometimes speak louder to be heard by their companions.

Break up a large area into smaller areas. Introduce nooks and crannies, curves, or a divider wall that juts out.

Turn the music down or off. The direction that speakers are aimed could make a difference, too. Vieweger recommends that owners of large restaurants consult a sound engineer for help in customizing a sound system.

A balance

Some restaurants have even found ways to make both the party lovers and the peace-and-quiet lovers happy. Designer Adam Tihany of New York City says that in Europe there are restaurants with both noisy areas and quiet areas. He likens the arrangement to having a smoking and a nonsmoking area. These European restaurants have a formal dining room with tablecloths, carpeting and generous space between tables. The same restaurants also include a bistro-like area with bare tables and bare floors. When Tihany designed the three Bice restaurants for New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, he followed the European idea, incorporating a quiet fine-dining area and a livelier bistro area into one building. Tihany also likes to create a diversity of spaces in a restaurant, with some spaces designed for large parties and some set aside for quiet, intimate dining.

Whether your restaurant is a hub of activity or a sanctuary from the busy world, don't overlook the role of noise. If yours is designed to be a lively gathering spot, but you are losing customers because people are complaining about the noise, then it probably would be wise to take steps to dampen the sound. If yours is a restaurant so quiet you can hear a pin drop—and tables sit empty night after night—perhaps it's time to add a spark of energy in the form of some carefully planned noise. Finding the right amount of sound is a matter of knowing your customers. ❑

Julie Fintel is a writer in Burke, Virginia

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THE RESTAURANT AROUND THE CORNER

NEIGHBORHOOD RESTAURANTS ARE BACK IN STYLE

by Melanie A. Crosby

In these days of stiff competition and tight dollars, it takes more than just good food to bring customers in and keep them. It takes genuine hospitality, and few operations serve up a more heaping helping than the neighborhood restaurant—the friendly joint around the corner where neither the food nor the size of the bill ever comes as a surprise.

The *1991 Zagat New York City Restaurant Survey* makes special note of the significant number of establishments that are focusing not on widespread fame and culinary glitter but on neighborhood locals and the comforts of home. This trend toward neighborhood restaurants is happening well beyond New York, though, as casual neighborhood spots spring up from coast to coast. This is not so much an emerging trend as a re-emerging one; new operators today are discovering the secrets that many "neighborhood" restaurateurs have known for years.

The term "neighborhood restaurant" means different things to different people, and there are many facets to this local institution. Such a spot can be anything from the local lunchtime watering hole to the evening lingering spot, or it may be a special celebration destination. It's the place where the locals go, and it's the place where neighbors and friends meet.

"Our whole concept was to create a place where the neighborhood could come for something to drink and eat at a reasonable price," says Karyn Wagner, owner of Joe's Bar & Grill in New York City. "We wanted to make the whole experience so good they would come back again and again. So far, it's worked." Wagner estimates that about 80 percent of their business comes directly from the restaurant's West Village neighborhood. The restaurant has built its loyal following in just 15 months.

When Craig Bero, owner of the year-old restaurant Anglers & Writers, also in New York, opened his new establishment, he too hoped to create a neighborhood cafe. Apparently he has succeeded. According to Bero, 90 to 95 percent of his clientele are neighbors from Manhattan's West Village. "Our neighborhood is filled with artists, writers, journalists and theater people who are looking for a place to relax," says Bero. That's what he provides at Anglers & Writers.

Bero is also the owner of Village Atelier, a more upscale restaurant which he says is also a neighborhood joint. "At least 80 percent of my clientele at Atelier are regulars," he says. "I see some of the people at least two or three times per week. Even in snowstorms, we're packed. They're lined up outside waiting to get in."

Neighborhoods across America

Restaurants outside New York City know the value of the neighborhood as well. At the Hyde Street Bistro, in the Russian Hill neighborhood of San Francisco, the neighborhood has been a key to success since the establishment opened in 1989. "We have a very strong neighborhood following," says owner Albert Rainer. "It's very difficult for a new restaurant to get a loyal following, especially in San Francisco where there are so many choices and so many restaurants opening and closing."

Rainer estimates that 70 percent of his guests live in the neighborhood or at least the local area. The clientele is quite diverse, as is the neighborhood,

Fishing, literature and conversation provide the theme for Anglers & Writers, a homey neighborhood restaurant in Manhattan's West Village.

and includes young people as well as wealthier retirees. "The idea behind the restaurant was to create a restaurant that would represent the neighborhood. We have a very diversified guest list," he says.

Bob Shaughnessy, owner of The Other Place Pub in Boylston, Massachusetts (east of Worcester), has known the secret of neighborhood regulars for the 11 years he's been in business. "We have a lot of regulars here," he says. "This is the Boylston edition of 'Cheers,' " he laughs. "We have all the regular characters." Shaughnessy says at least 65 percent of his customers are locals, and many have been around for a long time. "This is a very friendly place," he says. "Everyone knows everyone else."

Customers are also drawn back time and again to The Wishing Well in the North County area of St. Louis. The restaurant has been in the same location for all of its 35 years, and it's a neighborhood landmark—or rather a landmark of what the neighborhood used to be. "This neighborhood has gone through many changes," says owner Stephen Molina, "but we haven't. We're still here, and we're still doing things the same way."

At The Wishing Well, a bit of the "old neighborhood" is still going strong, as most of Molina's core of regular customers have since moved out of the North County neighborhood but still come back to the local restaurant hangout. "Many of our customers are second and third-generation diners," says Molina. "They remember being here in booster chairs, and now their kids are in booster chairs. And their parents still eat here, too."

Coy's Steakhouse in Little Rock, Arkansas, is also a neighborhood landmark. "Coy's is known all over the state," says Trudy Moore, director of marketing for the steakhouse, "but most of our business in Little Rock is local. We have very loyal customers." Coy's, she says, is known as the place to go for a special occasion. "If there's something to celebrate, they come to Coy's," she says. Sixty percent of Coy's business comes from local celebratory banquets.

Know your neighbors

What is the key to the success of these neighborhood joints? It's the neighbors themselves, the customers—and successful neighborhood operators take extra steps to get to know their customers as they would the people next door. "Getting to know the people and building on that relationship is what's important," says Anglers & Writers' Bero.

How do you make a customer a neighbor? First and foremost, you learn the person's name. "If you ask people what their favorite restaurant is or where they like to go, they will say 'where they know my name,' " says Albert Rainer. His Hyde Street staff makes a special point of learning patrons' names, drawing them from reservation lists and business cards. "When guests come in for the second or third time, we will call them by name," says Rainer. At Anglers & Writers, everyone is on a first-name basis, even the few famous folks who drop in every now and then. The same is true at nearby Joe's Bar & Grill. "We know all of our neighborhood regulars by name," says Karyn Wagner, "and they know us. They know exactly which table they want and its number."

Taking care of the regulars

Neighborhood customers are the "in" crowd of the neighborhood establishment, and many restaurants offer these regulars special deals and promotions to which outsiders are not entitled. Coy's Steakhouse sends mailings to its regular customers about once a month. The mailer often advertises a special deal for mailing-list customers only, such as buy-one-get-one-free specials. During Christmas of 1990, Coy's sponsored a "Get Mugged at Coy's" promotion, which entitled each customer who purchased $50 worth of gift certificates to receive a gift box of four Irish coffee mugs already wrapped and ready to go under the tree.

The Other Place Pub offers its regulars a Supersaver Supper Club card, which contains 30 numbers. Each time a customer eats in the restaurant, one number is punched with the Pub's special punch. Every fifth meal is a free lunch; every tenth meal is a free dinner. "The card encourages those guys that come in for lunch every day to come back for that free dinner," says Shaughnessy. Each dinner purchase of $4.95 or more also gives the diner a chance at the week's lucky-number drawing. The winning number is posted for several days, and customers must come in to see it.

In addition to special deals, regular customers are also often treated to special events—as if they were part of the family. This past Christmas, Joe's Bar & Grill held a tree-trimming party and invited all its regular customers. Each customer was asked to bring an ornament to add to the tree. "The tree looked great," says Wagner, "and each customer could see how he or she had contributed. They'd bring friends in and say, 'See, there's my ornament.' " On a smaller scale, Joe's serves a special Sunday night "soup and sandwich supper" designed primarily for the neighborhood regulars, and there are many spur-of-the-moment gatherings. "It's very much a 'Hey, what's happening at Joe's this week?' type of thing," says Wagner.

Craig Bero, too, believes in celebrating with the regulars. Although New Year's Eve is considered by many restaurateurs to be the most lucrative night of the year, Bero takes it off the books at the Village Atelier and invites all of his regular customers to a party at the restaurant. "It's to show them what great customers they've been all year," he says.

A home away from home

Atmosphere is an important element in a successful "neighborhood" restaurant. Decor can vary widely, but comfort is the key. Neighborhood restaurants are an extension of the neighborhood and an extension of home—casual, familiar and comfortable. "This is a very homey place," says Shaughnessy of the Other Place Pub's warm tavern-like atmosphere. The decor at Bero's Village Atelier is reminiscent of a country inn. Accord-

ing to Bero, dining at the Village Atelier "doesn't feel like you're eating in a restaurant; it feels like someone's home."

Many neighborhood restaurants actually resemble neighborhood homes. Both Joe's Bar & Grill and Anglers & Writers are housed in historic areas of New York's Greenwich Village, and the owners were restricted from changing the understated storefronts when they took over the sites. Such constraints, however, add to the establishments' neighborhood appeal. "We have a very unobtrusive storefront with a very small window," says Wagner of Joe's. "You really have to know where this place is to find it, and the neighborhood does." "We don't even have a sign out front," says Bero, "just a little plaque by the door. But our customers know where to find us."

For Bero, it's important that his neighborhood restaurants look and feel like home on the inside as well as outside. Tables are never pushed together, and lounge areas with comfortable couches are provided for customers. Although each of Bero's establishments could easily double its occupancy level, Village Atelier seats only 38, and Anglers & Writers seats only 45. "People like space," says Bero. "It helps them relax."

Bero's couches encourage conversation as well as relaxation. The restaurants offer no gimmicks and no music, he says, to allow this different sort of entertainment to flourish. "I believe a cafe without music becomes a cafe with music," says Bero, referring to the melody of conversation. "People tend to linger, and I encourage it," he says. One communal table at Village Atelier begins the night empty but eventually fills with "people who somehow all know each other," which allows for great interaction and "spontaneous things to happen intellectually," he says. A centerpiece of Anglers & Writers is an antique rolltop desk filled with books and writing instruments that customers are welcome to use.

For many customers and operators, a homelike atmosphere is closely linked with nostalgia. Many successful neighborhood spots concentrate on old-fashioned "comfort" foods of days gone by and serve traditional American fare such as burgers, soups and pies. "Many of our recipes date from the 1920s. I even run an ad in the *Dispatch* with a picture of my grandfather to show people that things haven't changed," says The Wishing Well's Molina, who believes that the restaurant's commitment to the old ways is the major reason the customers keep coming back. "We still do things the way restaurants used to do them," he says.

Joe's Bar & Grill specializes in classic cocktails like Manhattans and martinis and in simple, uncomplicated foods like chicken pot pie and Caesar salad prepared tableside, foods that Wagner says "don't overwhelm the experience."

Nostalgic decor often plays a part in the "neighborhood" restaurant. Wagner describes her establishment as "an updated '90s neighborhood saloon" with brick walls and tapestry banquettes providing extra warmth. "They say that everything old is what's new again, and that's the way we think here," she says.

Anglers & Writers' atmosphere is reminiscent of the small fishing village in Wisconsin where Bero grew up. The restaurant "looks more like something you'd find in the North Woods of Wisconsin than in Manhattan's West Village," says Bero. "It's the kind of place where I could talk to my grandfather about who was catching what fish that day and what farmer was having trouble with his crops." The cafe even houses an extensive collection of old fishing gear.

A comfortable price

In today's uncertain economic climate, customers have become exceedingly more value-conscious, and neighborhood operators have obliged by providing good value. A comfortable price is as important as a casual atmosphere. Craig Bero opened Anglers & Writers as a less expensive alternative to Village Atelier. He refers to Anglers & Writers as a "tea room," where just about everything on the menu is priced between $6 and $7. At The Wishing Well in St. Louis, a complete meal costs less than $15, including drinks. "We like to think of ourselves as providing gourmet food

© 1991 Rick Friedman

without the gourmet prices," says owner Molina. San Francisco's Hyde Street Bistro offers its dishes for less than $25 per person, a moderate price in the Bay area. Value is of utmost importance to Rainer, and he tries to keep prices as reasonable as possible. "Our guests are always pleasantly surprised when they get the check," he says, "and our lower prices make us available to many people."

Some neighborhood operators have introduced new, less expensive dining options to their local areas. For example, Anglers & Writers offers an afternoon tea—a novelty in the Village. Diners are served a full English tea complete with fresh scones and a plate of sandwiches for $10. "We're booked up months in advance," says Bero. "Many customers make the tea an early dinner."

Service with a smile and a familiar face

Value, of course, goes beyond good food and low prices. Customers pay for the total dining experience, and service can often make or break a value. At neighborhood restaurants, customers are, by definition, neighbors, and they expect to be treated as such. A familiar face and a smile will bring them back again. "We're very friendly people here," says Karyn Wagner of the service staff at Joe's. "We're very un-New York. People say 'hi' and 'bye' to you here. People greet you at the door. Our customers are special people when they walk through that door."

The Other Place Pub's Bob Shaughnessy agrees. "One key to our success is the service," he says. "We've had a lot of the same help here for the 11 years we've been

Bob Shaughnessy takes the time to get to know the regulars at The Other Place Pub in Boylston, Massachusetts.

here, and everyone knows everyone else." The Wishing Well's Stephen Molina has several servers who have been on the staff for more than 20 years. "They've been here a long time, and they're good servers," he says. "They are one reason we have so much repeat business." Rainer's Hyde Street Bistro also has strong regular staff members who have become familiar to the customers and have developed a reputation for going out of their way to make dining an enjoyable experience. "After all," says Rainer, "we are not just selling food and wine, we are selling hospitality; and that requires more effort."

Hospitality does indeed require more work, but at successful neighborhood restaurants, the extra effort seems effortless. Rainer says many of his customers request vegetarian dishes or are on restricted diets and can't have certain spices. "Whatever it takes to make someone happy here, we do it," he says.

The larger neighborhood

Although customers are important to a neighborhood restaurant, there is an equally vital element—the neighborhood itself. Involvement with the local community contributes to a strong business and a strong neighborhood.

Neighborhood involvement can take many forms. First, it can serve as a public relations tool—a way to build an establishment's image. Local fundraisers and charity events can do much to heighten a restaurant's reputation in a local area. The Wishing Well in St. Louis supports local churches through advertisements in their bulletins and works for fundraisers whenever possible. "We work long, hard hours here," says Molina, "but we help out whenever we can."

Hyde Street Bistro's Rainer shares that enthusiasm, but cautions that "if you do too much, you get stretched too far and do little good." His restaurant focuses on a few community commitments such as school programs and fundraisers for Mt. Zion Hospital. Anglers & Writers, in addition to advertising events at local schools and St. Luke's Church, is heavily involved with issues of interest to both customers and Mr. Bero himself, such as Trout Unlimited, an environmental group of fly fishermen in New York that work for water quality and conservation. Coy's Steakhouse recently supported the local Girl Scout cookie drive, sponsoring the top-sales scout in the local newspaper, hanging posters throughout the restaurant and serving Girl Scout cookies free for dessert.

Neighborhood involvement can do far more than just boost your name—it can advertise it without the high cost of an ad campaign. Since many neighborhood establishments have limited advertising budgets, using community activities as promotional events makes sound sense. "It's a great way to get our name into the community," says Trudy Moore of the many promotional items Coy's distributes at local events. Moore also believes strongly in working with other merchants for cross-promotional gain. "We're a very loyal community," she says, "and we work well together." Coy's recently participated in a bridal fair that featured local florists, photographers and dress shops, and it gave Coy's a chance to showcase its banquet facilities. Other forms of community support, such as buying ad space in church programs, nonprofit theater programs or school publications, can also be inexpensive and rewarding—as well as helpful. "Just small things to keep our name in front of the community and help out," says Joe's Bar & Grill's Wagner. Sponsoring local sports teams, as The Wishing Well does, is also a way to flash your name across a field.

Neighborhood establishments are involved in many activities for the sake of the neighborhood itself: to help it grow and develop, to help it stay the same or to make it again what it once was. Even though the bulk of The Wishing Well's regulars are part of a neighborhood long gone by, Molina works diligently to improve his North County neighborhood of today. As a director of the local Chamber of Commerce and a member of a local development commission, he keeps careful track of local trends and works to rehabilitate neighborhoods and businesses. "We are turning upwards again," Molina reports hopefully.

Hyde Street Bistro's Albert Rainer belongs to the Russian Hill Neighborhood Association to work for the betterment of his community. "I strongly believe in giving something back [to the neighborhood]," he says. "You owe something to your fellow citizens who support you."

Craig Bero contributes to the development of his neighborhood in a slightly different way: He concentrates on expanding the artistic life of the community. Anglers & Writers opens the floor to area musicians on Sunday nights for small concerts, and he occasionally showcases a small local theater company. "We never charge admission," he says. "These are community activities. We invite the regulars in."

A network of support

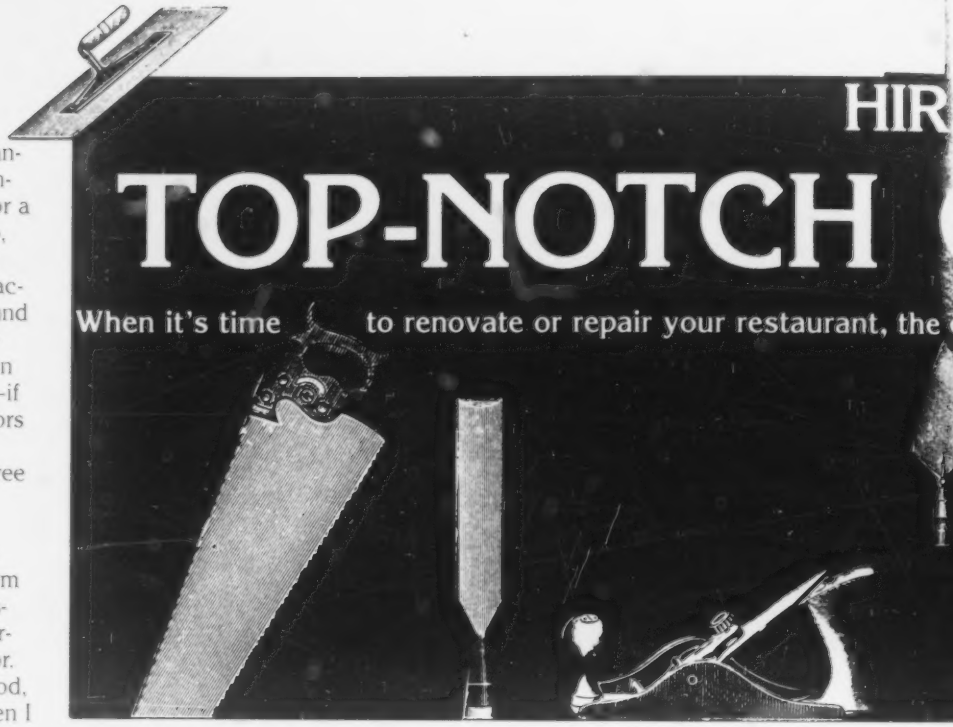
As Hyde Street Bistro's Albert Rainer says, the key to a successful neighborhood restaurant is support—mutual support. The door is always open; the atmosphere, relaxed. The staff is friendly and familiar; the food is "comforting" in both style and price. And restaurants that offer such neighborhood comforts get comfort in return—the comfort of knowing that the regulars will come back and that the neighborhood will see the restaurant through good times and bad. "People wonder how we're making it," says Bero, "with restaurants closing down all the time here. But I go in there every day and there are the people, the same people. We would be lost without the neighborhood. That's how we're making it."

Melanie Crosby is managing editor of ***Restaurants USA.***

HIR

TOP-NOTCH

When it's time to renovate or repair your restaurant, the



by Ju

Whether you are planning a new million-dollar restaurant or a $25,000 repair job, don't assume that luck will lead you to a good contractor for the job. Horror stories abound about fly-by-night contractors who come in, accept a deposit, and then don't come back for two months—if at all. And then there are contractors who take a year to do a job that should have been completed in three months.

Susan Welzien, president and owner of S.W. Wells Design Associates, a Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, firm that specializes in the design of restaurants, has learned by trial and error how to select a good contractor. "Most contractors are basically good, honest people," she says, "but when I was beginning in this business, I was ripped off by some contractors."

Hiring a dishonest contractor, or a contractor who is not qualified to do the job, may cost not only extra money, but extra time as well. To a restaurateur who must close the restaurant or limit seating while construction is going on, time equals money. When you need a contractor, you want someone who will do the job properly, in a timely manner and within your budget.

Finding your own

When it is time to begin the search for a contractor, some people open the yellow pages and call the firm with the most appealing ad. Those like Welzien who are experienced in using contractors are vehement in opposing that method. Instead, they say, begin the search by asking friends, relatives and neighbors for names of contractors they have used and would recommend. If you are employing an architect, designer or foodservice consultant, ask which contractors they have worked with and liked. The chamber of commerce and professional associations (including the local restaurant association) are other sources, although these sources will probably provide you with lists but no specific recommendations. Ask fellow restaurateurs, too, especially those who have recently had work done that is to your liking.

Qualities to look for

Now that you have gathered a list of names, you must do some research before inviting three to five of them to bid on your job. These are the standards you should use:

1. Look for someone established. "Don't go to a little shop that opened two months ago, even if you are offered a great deal, because at least half of those great deals fall through," advises Welzien. Of course, if your job is very small, perhaps you can afford to take a chance at those odds. You may end up with someone so eager to build a reputation that the crew will knock themselves out for you.

2. Look for a contractor who is licensed, bonded and insured. Not all counties or states require licenses, and those that do have different requirements for obtaining them. For example, some jurisdictions make applicants take a test on job skills and knowledge of local building codes.

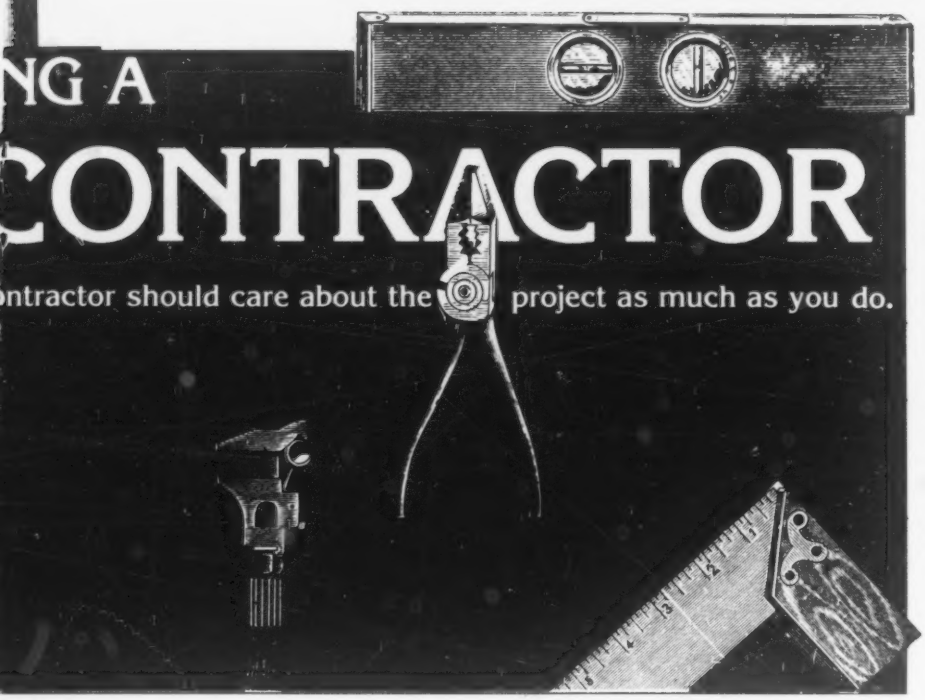
Bonding is a kind of insurance. When a contractor advertises that he is bonded, it usually means that you will be protected if something goes wrong—for instance if one of the subcontractors steals something while working on your establishment.

3. Check references. The most important criterion for finding a contractor is a set of good references.

Ask your prospective contractors to provide a list of references with phone numbers of customers who have had work done similar in size and scope to what you want. Then call these people and ask them the following questions:

- ☐ What sort of work did the contractor do for you?
- ☐ Did the contractor guarantee the work and fulfill the guarantee?
- ☐ Did the contractor follow your ideas and add to them?
- ☐ What were the workers like, and how well were they supervised?
- ☐ Did the contractor honor the bid price?
- ☐ How was the overall quality of the work?
- ☐ Was the work completed on schedule?
- ☐ Did you get along with the contractor?
- ☐ Would you hire the contractor again?

4. Choose a contractor familiar with restaurants and your area. Like doctors and lawyers, contractors specialize. A contractor who builds beautiful houses may not have the know-how to build a restaurant. If the contractor you choose has to struggle with unfamiliar technology and codes, chances are that the entire building process will take longer. When Pete Moffett, president of the



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company that owns four Manhattan Cooler restaurants in the Los Angeles area, built his first restaurant, he used a contractor who specialized in houses. "He had no clue what to do when the fire marshal and health inspector came by," Moffett says.

A knowledge of building codes is of special importance to anyone involved in building or remodeling a restaurant. Regulations govern everything from seating capacity to exit lights to exhaust systems. Because building codes are different in every area (and because they change often), it pays to hire someone familiar with building codes in your city, county or state. A contractor who undertakes work without checking codes could be in for some expensive surprises, as restaurateur Moffett learned the hard way. California codes require floor sinks to be in a certain place under any equipment that discharges (such as a dishwasher). A contractor working for Moffett put them in the wrong place, making it necessary to move them all after the job was supposedly finished.

5. Check the contractor's financial stability. A contractor who suddenly goes out of business could leave you with an unfinished project. It is hard to be sure that this will not happen, but a good reputation is one way of knowing whether a contractor is considered a good risk. You can also ask for bank and credit references.

Joe Spinelli, president and owner of Restaurant Construction Consultants in Rockville, Maryland, has often been called in by restaurant owners to get a project going again after a contractor went out of business during a project. He advises paying in installments to eliminate some of the risk. "That way you don't pay for more than you receive," says Spinelli. "If he goes out of business in the middle of the job and you've only paid him $2,000 on a $10,000 job, it's likely you received $2,000 worth of work from him before he left."

6. Check with your Better Business Bureau. The Better Business Bureau can tell you whether any complaints have been lodged against your candidates and how these conflicts were resolved. The Bureau won't be able to steer you to good contractors, but they can help you avoid bad ones.

7. Invite candidates to walk through the future work site with you. If you have had an architect or designer draw up plans, this is the time to go over them with your prospective contractor. The walk-through is the time to decide whether the contractor and you have a good rapport. You're going to be working closely with the contractor, and it's important that you communicate well.

Asking for bids

When the candidates know precisely what the job entails, it is time for them to submit bids and for you to make your choice.

Do not simply take the lowest bid without investigating thoroughly why the bid is low. Be skeptical. Ask questions about materials, costs and services. For instance, does the contractor have the number of workers it will take to do your job in the agreed amount of time? Welzien recently took the lowest bid for a flooring job and got substandard work. "You can't cut corners," she says. On the other hand, you may find out there are valid reasons for the lower bid. One remodeling contractor, for example, works out of his home and thus avoids the overhead of maintaining an office—a savings he passes on to his customers.

Get it in writing

You have found a good contractor. Now it is time to sign an agreement. Standard contract forms are available from printers, your contractor or the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

If you have any special concerns about the job, discuss them before signing the contract. Include the agreed-upon solutions in the contract. Do not sign until all specifications are written to your satisfaction and take nothing for granted—put it in writing.

Within the contract should be a "waiver of lien." When the waiver is signed by the major contractor and any subcontractors that are used, you will be protected against liens placed against your property by workers whom the general contractor has failed to pay. Waiver-of-lien forms are available at office supply stores.

Be sure to keep copies of all documents.

Homework pays off

Finding a top-notch contractor will take some time and work on your part. But careful research done before you sign a contract will greatly increase your chances of ending up with a job that you are happy with. ❑

Julie Fintel is a writer in Burke, Virginia.

REJUVENATE YOUR BUSINESS AT THE

1991 SHOW

The National Restaurant Association Show is an education, a time for rejuvenation and a celebration all in one. For anyone looking to improve business, make important industry contacts and stay on top of industry trends, the Show in Chicago is the place to be.

The heart of the Show is the exhibit floor, where ideas are shared and contacts are made.

THE 72ND NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION SHOW

The countdown to the 72nd annual National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show has begun. Restaurateurs, hoteliers and foodservice professionals of all types await May 18-22, 1991, and the unfolding of this major industry event at Chicago's McCormick Place.

And with good reason. The Show is the place to check the pulse of the hospitality industry by viewing the latest trends, hearing the latest management strategies and seeing the newest technological innovations at work. It's also a once-a-year chance to learn from the best—some of the foremost thinkers of our time, the most creative practitioners in the industry and the culinary masters who are lighting the way for foodservice in this country and abroad.

And the exhibit floor, the heart of the Show, holds 1,900 exhibitors offering thousands of new products, services and ideas that hold the answers to the problems, challenges and opportunities facing your business.

By day, there are riveting Theatre Series presentations, insightful Management Clinic programs and practical operations-oriented seminars. By night, there are glamorous stars, top-flight entertainment, romantic dancing, gourmet dining and the fabulous nightlife that is a Show tradition.

More than 100,000 attendees from 50 states and 70 foreign countries testify to the uniqueness of the National Restaurant Association Show. Truly in a class of its own, the annual Show is a personal and professional experience too good to miss. Here's what you can expect to see and experience at the 72nd annual Show.

BRING YOUR WALKING SHOES

Now in its 72nd year, the Show continues to amaze attendees with its enormity, diversity and creativity. Nowhere is the unique character of the Show more evident than in its 1,900 exhibitors, covering four huge floors and offering more products, equipment and services than any other show of its kind.

Dubbed the "Show of Shows," this is the place to glimpse trends before they hit the industry and the place to view the latest international products and services before they hit the U.S. market. More international exhibitors and visitors flock to the Show every year. This year's displays include exhibitions from Australia, Canada, Italy, Austria, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, Belgium, Hong Kong and New Zealand.

Always a spectacular display of industry talent and expertise, this year's Show floor promises to be more vital, comprehensive and worthwhile than ever. Be sure to catch these special segments on the lobby level of McCormick Place North:

□ *The Hotel Collection*. This new section is a must-see for hotel and motel operators or anyone interested in the lodging industry. Attendees will see many of the supplies needed to run an efficient and successful hotel or motel operation. Premier hotel suppliers will showcase items including beds, furniture, fixtures, uniforms and other special items unique to lodging operations.

□ *Illinois Avenue*. This special sec-

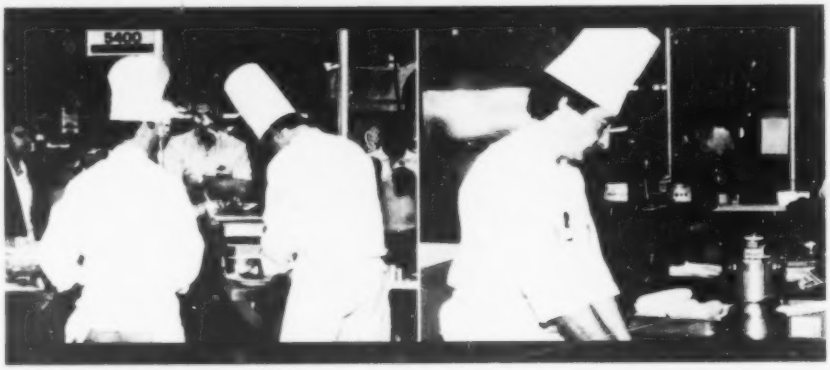
AMERICAN CULINARY CLASSIC

The American Culinary Classic is an experience too good to miss. Held only every four years, this world-class cold and hot-food competition is the largest and most prestigious culinary competition held in the United States. It may well be your only chance to see the brightest lights in international cooking from around the globe in heated competition.

Like the Olympics, this prestigious competition attracts the best. Chefs from 16 nations and four continents match wits and culinary wisdom. Official teams are expected from Austria, Canada, China, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.

See these masters at work Saturday through Tuesday, right on the exhibit floor of McCormick Place North. Four teams compete each day in the hot-food event, and four other teams compete in the cold (restaurant, buffet and dessert platters) competition. Specially designed glass-enclosed kitchens enable attendees to catch every nuance of the action.

Teams that place first, second and third in the hot and cold-food competitions and those that place first, second and third in the overall competition (a combination of hot and cold) will be awarded sterling silver medals.



The American Culinary Classic is the most prestigious culinary competition held in the United States.

Winners of the American Culinary Classic will be announced at a special awards ceremony in the main hall of the Field Museum of Natural History, located on the waterfront near McCormick Place, on Tuesday evening, May 21, at 6 p.m. This event of pomp and splendor includes a Parade of Nations, with chefs in whites carrying their national flags and with an orchestra playing songs of the winning countries.

The American Culinary Classic is held in conjunction with the American Culinary Federation (ACF) and the ACF-Chicago Chefs of Cuisine. It is recognized and endorsed by these organizations as well as by the World Association of Cooks Societies.

tion features the products and services of companies looking to break into or expand in the Chicagoland area. This is the best place to view the latest products and services taking the Windy City by storm.

□ *Wine and Spirits Way.* Discover the latest trends in the world of wine and learn about some of the best buys in the industry. Wine and Spirits Way features scores of the finest domestic and international wines and exhibitors promoting related aspects of the wine industry.

□ *The Seafood Center.* It's 10,000 square feet of piscatorial knowledge and product, and it's *the* place to discover the latest seafood trends. View the exotic and mundane. See crab, shrimp, lobster and other types of fish from seafood and fish suppliers from both coasts and around the country.

A ROYAL BEGINNING

Communication is what the National Restaurant Association Show is all about. And who better to kick off the Show than broadcast personality Larry King, a master of communication.

A popular television and radio host, Larry King has interviewed many of the most interesting people in the world: writers, politicians, athletes, film directors, historians and other notables, totaling more than 30,000 people. King is the host of *The Larry King Show*, a nightly radio show aired over 355 stations on the Mutual Broadcasting System, and of *Larry King Live*, Cable News Network's lively television program. He also pens a weekly column, "Larry King's People," for *USA Today* and is the author of four books: *Larry King, Tell It To The King, Mr. King You're Having A Heart Attack* and *Larry King Tell Me More*.

Joining special guest speaker Larry King at the podium for the opening-day program is National Restaurant Association President Michael E. Hurst, who caps off his noteworthy year in office during the National Restaurant Association Show. Hurst will highlight industry trends and critical issues, and will review the association's achievements of the past year, in particular covering the success of the "We're glad you're here!" program.

Don't miss this spectacular kickoff to the 72nd National Restaurant Association Show in the Arie Crown Theatre of McCormick Place on Sunday, May 19, at 2 p.m.

Broadcast personality Larry King (left) will bring his wit and energy to the opening-day program at the Arie Crown Theatre on Sunday, May 19.

National Restaurant Association President Michael E. Hurst (right) will also address the opening-day crowd.

SHOW SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, MAY 18

9:00 a.m.
Registration and check-in for the pre-Show seminars, presented by the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association; McCormick Place North, lower level

9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
American Culinary Classic, McCormick Place North, exhibit floor, first of four days; continues May 19, 20 and 21

9:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Dealer/supplier/press preview of exposition, McCormick Place

10:00 a.m.–6:30 p.m.
Two-day, pre-Show seminar:
SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation, continues May 19

10:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Full-day, pre-Show seminars:
- ☐ Banquet Management
- ☐ Dining Room Management
- ☐ Food Cost Management
- ☐ Profitability
- ☐ SERVSAFE/Serving Alcohol Safely

10:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
Half-day, pre-Show seminars:
- ☐ Kitchen Management
- ☐ Legal Issues for Foodservice Operators
- ☐ Promoting Your Restaurant
- ☐ Service That Sells
- ☐ The Labor Issue
- ☐ Train-the-Trainer

11:30 a.m.
35th Annual Hennessy Awards Luncheon, Hyatt Regency Chicago (ticketed event)

6:30 p.m.
The Grand Banquet and Show/CLF Gala, Hyatt Regency Chicago, in honor of the National Restaurant Association's new chairman of the board and president, with the Four Tops and the Dick Judson Orchestra (ticketed event)

SUNDAY, MAY 19

8:00 a.m.
The start of "The Main Course" 10K race, Grant Park

9:00 a.m.
Registration and check-in for the pre-Show seminars presented by the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association, McCormick Place North, lower level

10:00 a.m.–6:30 p.m.
Two-day, pre-Show seminar:
SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation, last day

10:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Full-day, pre-Show seminars:
- ☐ Food Cost Management
- ☐ Kitchen Management
- ☐ Profitability
- ☐ SERVSAFE/AFS Train-the-Trainer
- ☐ Successful Buffet Management

10:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
Half-day, pre-Show seminars:
- ☐ Dining Room Management
- ☐ Promoting Your Restaurant
- ☐ Service That Sells
- ☐ Stress Management
- ☐ Theft Control

10:30 a.m.–6:00 p.m.
Exposition opens, McCormick Place

10:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
American Culinary Classic, McCormick Place North, exhibit floor, second of four days; continues May 20 and 21

10:30 a.m.–6:00 p.m.
21st Annual Culinary Arts Salon, McCormick Place East, Chicago Room, first of three days; continues May 20 and 21

11:30 a.m.
Award ceremonies for the 21st Annual Culinary Arts Salon, McCormick Place East, Jane Addams Room

2:00 p.m.
Opening-Day Ceremony at the Arie Crown Theater, McCormick Place East, with a welcoming address by National Restaurant Association Chairman of the Board and President Michael E. Hurst, who shares the podium with TV and radio host Larry King

9:00 p.m.–1:00 a.m.
Convention Capers I featuring Country vocalist and songwriter Eddy Raven and two of country music's fastest-rising stars, Daniele Alexander and Butch Baker. Hyatt Regency Chicago

MONDAY, MAY 20

9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Exposition opens, McCormick Place

9:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
American Culinary Classic, McCormick Place North exhibit floor, third of four days, continues May 21

9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
21st Annual Culinary Arts Salon, McCormick Place East, Chicago Room, second of three days, continues May 21

10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East:
- ☐ Feeding a Fitter American: The Restaurant's Role, with *New York Times* personal-health columnist and author Jane Brody, Theatre 1
- ☐ How to Maintain Turnover Below 50%, Do Double the Volume of Competitors, All Without Advertising, Theatre 2

Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
- ☐ Positioning for Success
- ☐ How to Save Water, Save Money and Build Up Sexual Awareness
- ☐ Healthy Cookin' That'll Put Some Spice in Your Life

Noon–1:30 p.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East:
□ Marketing International Travel, Theatre 1
□ Look Who's Wrecking Your Business Now, Theatre 2
□ A Meeting With Stan Freberg, Theatre 3
Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
□ Quality Training on $1.99 a Day

2:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East:
□ It's Not That Easy Being Green, Theatre 3
□ Don't Lose Your Restaurant by Accident, Theatre 2
□ Honest Work, Theatre 1
Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
□ Perspective Is Everything

9:00 p.m.–1:00 a.m.
Convention Capers II featuring blues legend Buddy Guy. Also stars the Booze Brothers Revue, Chicago Marriott

TUESDAY, MAY 21

9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
□ Salute to Excellence Forums. Industry professionals participate in two separate forums: one with 200 outstanding students and the other with leading educators in the hospitality field. Chicago Hilton & Towers

9:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Exposition opens, McCormick Place

9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
American Culinary Classic, McCormick Place North, exhibit floor, last day

9:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
21st Annual Culinary Arts Salon, McCormick Place East, Chicago Room, last day

10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East:
□ Achieving Breakthrough Service, Theatre 2
□ It's Not What Happens to You, It's What You Do About It, Theatre 3
□ The Psychology Factor, Theatre 1
Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
□ What's My Restaurant Got to Do With Saving the Earth?
□ Are You Listening?

Noon
The Illinois Tourism Luncheon honors former Illinois Governor James R. Thompson with the Illinois Tourism Award. With radio personality Wally Phillips as master of ceremonies and U.S. Secretary of Transportation Samuel K. Skinner as presenter of the award. Produced by the Illinois Restaurant Association in co-operation with the Hotel-Motel Association of Illinois, McCormick Place East, Lindheimer Room

Noon–1:30 p.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East:
□ Coming to Your Senses: What's New in Attracting Customers, Theatre 2
□ Improve Service and Quality, Reduce Cost, Build Customer Loyalty, Theatre 1

Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
□ Participative Employee Relations
□ Creative Recruiting: Beyond the Classifieds

2:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East
□ How to Make Stress Work for You, Theatre 1
□ Butkus! Actor and former pro football star Dick Butkus, Theatre 2

Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
□ Hotel Guest Service
□ PRIDE Means Never Having to Say You're Sorry

6:00 p.m.
American Culinary Classic Awards Ceremony, Field Museum of National History

7:00 p.m.
Salute to Excellence Recepti[illegible] and Dinner, Chicago Hilton & [illegible] (ticketed event)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22

9:30 a.m.–2:00 p.m.
Exposition opens, McCormick Place

THE "MAIN COURSE" RACE: 3,500 ATHLETES READY AND SET TO GO

It may not be the Olympics, but 3,500 runners at the Grant Park starting point will be poised to take off in the 11th Annual "Main Course" 10K race. The "Main Course" 10K race, held Sunday, May 19, at 8 a.m., is the largest race of its kind to hit the city of Chicago each year, and it's an undisputed off-the-floor favorite with exhibitors, attendees and Chicago residents.

Participants trek a course that runs beside the shores of Lake Michigan, around McCormick Place, through the Prairie Avenue historic district and down Michigan Avenue to the finish line at Arvey Field. The "Main Course" is open to attendees, exhibitors and the public.

America's most hospitable race, the "Main Course" 10K, will be run on Sunday, May 19.

Runners who cross the finish line are eligible for the "You-Don't-Have-to-Win-to-Win" array of prizes—random drawings which include roundtrip airfare for two to anywhere in the U.S., plus dinners and weekend packages at top Chicagoland restaurants and hotels. Additionally, all race participants receive colorful "Main Course" tee-shirts and running gear contributed by the race sponsors.

Sponsors include Pepsi-Cola, Coca-Cola USA, Tyson Foods, Miller Brewing Co., Van Den Bergh Foods, and Minute Maid Foodservice.

The fee to participate in the "Main Course" is $8.95. For race applications or additional information, contact Jim Brimm, Convention Headquarters, 150 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60601. Or call (312) 853-2533.

CONVENTION CAPERS NIGHTLIFE

After busy days on the Show floor, the Sunday and Monday evening hush that settles over the halls of McCormick Place at sundown will be but a pause as the National Restaurant Association Show moves uptown. Convention Capers, four hours of top-flight entertainment, continuous music and dancing, will beckon Show attendees to join in the legendary nightlife that is a tradition at the Show.

It's a popular way to unwind and to meet fellow attendees and exhibitors in a relaxed setting. And best of all, it's free with the Show admission badge.

Here's what the bright lights have in store.

Convention Capers I unfolds at the Hyatt Regency Chicago on Sunday, May 19, from 9 p.m. until 1 a.m. Attendees can hear country vocalist Eddy Raven, who placed his mark on country music in the '80s with hits like *I Got Mexico*. In addition to being a recording star, Raven has won 16 ASCAP awards for his songwriting, including awards for Jeannie C. Riley's *Good Morning Country Rain* and the smash hit by the Oak Ridge Boys, *Thank God For Kids*. Raven's music has a unique sound and feel, sure to please all Capers attendees.

Eddy Raven performs at Sunday, May 19th's Convention Capers.

Sharing the bill with Eddy Raven are Daniele Alexander and Butch Baker, two of country music's fastest-rising stars. Their first duet, *It Wasn't You, It Wasn't Me*, is currently moving up the charts.

Convention Capers II kicks off at the Chicago Marriott on Monday, May 20, from 9 p.m. until 1 a.m. Featured is Chicago blues legend Buddy Guy, an innovative guitarist and intense vocalist who won three awards at last year's National Blues Awards. Also starring the highly danceable Booze Brothers revue.

STELLAR SALUTE TO EXCELLENCE

On Tuesday evening, May 21, the eyes of the industry turn to the Fifth Annual Salute to Excellence Reception and Dinner at the Chicago Hilton and Towers. This invitation-only event, sponsored by the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association, honors industry leaders for their contributions to the advancement of professionalism through education. Special recognition is also given to the leaders of tomorrow—200 top culinary and HRI students.

The climax of festivities is naming the winner of the prestigious Thad A. Eure, Jr., Ambassador of Hospitality Award, which will be presented by foundation chairman Jack A. Laughery.

Master of Ceremonies for the evening is National Restaurant Association President Michael E. Hurst, owner of 15th Street Fisheries in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

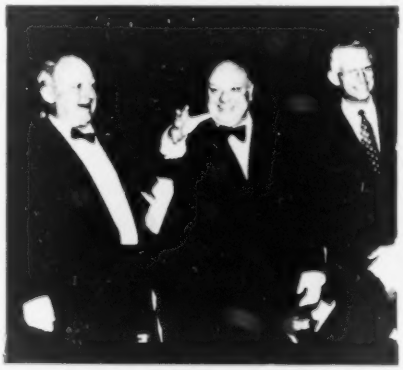
New inductees to the foundation's prestigious College of Diplomates honored at the banquet are Harris O. Machus, chairman emeritus of Harris O. Machus Enterprises, Inc., of Birmingham, Michigan; Anthony G. Mar-

THE FOUR TOPS AT THE GRAND BANQUET

Expect nothing but the tops from beginning to end at this year's Grand Banquet and Show/CLF Gala. Banquet attendees will enjoy gourmet dining, dancing and the music of the celebrated Four Tops, the "Grand Gentlemen of Rock 'n' Roll" and the group whose harmony helped define the Motown Sound.

The Grand Banquet and Show/CLF Gala is an event fit for royalty and an evening on the town not to be missed. Attendees can expect only the best as the National Restaurant Association and the foodservice industry honor the incoming association president at the Hyatt Regency Chicago on Saturday, May 18, at 6:30 p.m.

And who better to set the tone than the Four Tops, that fabulous '60s quartet that continues to delight audiences of many generations. Their list of top 10 hits, many of them gold records, includes legendary favorites like *Baby I Need Your Loving*, *I Can't Help Myself (Sugarpie, HoneyBunch)* and *It's the Same Old Song*. Rounding out the evening entertainment is the talented and popular Dick Judson Orchestra.



The association's 1990 officers, (left to right) President Michael Hurst, Vice President John Farquharson and Treasurer Richard Marriott, will celebrate the inauguration of the 1991 president at the annual Grand Banquet.

The Four Tops will sing their hits at the Grand Banquet and Show/CLF Gala.

It's an evening of magic from beginning to end. Tickets for the Grand Banquet and Show/CLF Gala are $125 per person. Contact Philip Kralovec at the National Restaurant Association office in Chicago at 150 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60601. Or call (312) 853-2525.

The educational foundation's "Salute to Excellence" Student and Faculty Forums take place Tuesday, May 21.

shall, Dean of the Florida International University School of Hospitality Management in North Miami, Florida; Jane Wallace, vice president and publisher of *Restaurants & Institutions* in Des Plaines, Illinois; and Donald G. Tober, chairman and chief executive officer of Sugar Foods Corporation in New York, New York.

Continuing its commitment to furthering excellence in the industry, the educational foundation again hosts its annual "Salute to Excellence" Student Forum during the day on Tuesday, May 21. This forum, which is co-sponsored by the Coca-Cola Company, maintains an important dialogue between the generations. Industry leaders and top students come together to exchange ideas and to discuss current issues and future challenges.

And for the first time ever, this year the foundation will also sponsor a Faculty Forum, similar in format to the Student Forum but involving faculty members from leading academic institutions. This important new forum will be produced in cooperation with the Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE).

The guest speaker at the Ambassador's Luncheon will be William H. Edwards, retired vice chairman of Hilton Hotels Corporation and the recipient of the 1990 Thad A. Eure, Jr., Ambassador of Hospitality Award.

EDUCATIONAL LINEUP

If the National Restaurant Association Show has a hallmark, it is ideas. And nowhere are ideas more plentiful than in the education programs that continue to draw attendees to the Show each year.

Whether you are a new show-goer or a veteran, the Theatre Series and the Management Clinic are an awesome display of knowledge, expertise and talent.

The Theatre Series allows attendees to gain insight, glean tips and gather techniques from some of the foremost personalities in the industry and the nation—writers, psychologists, management consultants, corporate strategists and others.

The Management Clinic helps operators to solve the problems and meet the challenges and opportunities facing their operations and the industry through dialogue with their peers.

Here are some of the special presentations on tap. All Theatre Series and Management Clinic sessions are held in the East Building of McCormick Place and are free to Show attendees.

Theatre Series

Monday and Tuesday, May 20–21

□ *Feeding a Fitter American: The Restaurant's Role.* Restaurants and good nutrition go hand in hand. Jane E. Brody, personal-health specialist of the *New York Times* and staff member for 25 years, discusses this important relationship in a special Theatre Series presentation.

Brody's widely read column appears in the *New York Times* every Thursday and in more than 100 other newspapers around the country. *Jane Brody's Nutrition Book* enjoyed 19 weeks on the best-seller list, and *Jane Brody's Good Food Book* is a complete guide to wholesome eating. Her latest book, *Jane Brody's Good Food Gourmet*, is a collection of more than 500 recipes and a menu guide for healthful entertaining.

□ *Marketing International Travel.* From the Persian Gulf crisis to the vast political changes sweeping the Eastern hemisphere, the international travel market seems to change daily. Richard C. Nelson of Hyatt Hotels & Resorts, and the 1991 president of the American Hotel and Motel Association, moderates a panel exploring the challenges and tremendous opportunities of the changing international travel market.

□ *Coming to Your Senses: What's New in Attracting Customers.* Learn about the latest international research on all five senses and 20 specific ways to attract and influence customers. Tips include use of localized lights and sounds, taste/touch connections, video vignettes and cross-promotions. Led by Kare Anderson, an Emmy-award-winning former journalist for the *Wall Street Journal*, UPI and *Le Monde*.

□ *Improve Service and Quality, Reduce Costs, Build Customer Loyalty.* Learn how quality improvement drives up productivity, increases employee morale and delights customers. Jim Clemmer outlines a strategic blueprint for high-powered organizational performance.

□ *Achieving Breakthrough Service.* Dr. Leonard A. Schlesinger can help your operation stand out from the pack. A member of the faculty of Harvard Business School since 1978 and former head of Au Bon Pain, Dr. Schlesinger captures what managers need to do to break through and become one of the elite few.

□ *Look Who's Wrecking Your Business Now.* Learn how to find, hire and promote the best people in order to increase productivity and profits. Joe Charbonneau, a top-rated speaker when he last spoke at the Show, explains how productivity is determined by the type of employee you hire.

□ *A Meeting With Stan Freberg.* Stan Freberg has many faces—humorist, satirist, director, producer, recording artist, composer, lyricist and author. Freberg is recognized as the man who gave advertising a sense of humor and, in the process, legitimized comedy as a creative approach to radio and television commercials. Freberg's commercials have copped 21 Clios, 18 International Broadcasting Awards, the grand prize at the Venice Film Festival and the New York Art Directors Club gold medal.

Educational sessions, featuring some of the brightest and most innovative thinkers in business today, are an integral part of the National Restaurant Association Show.

□ *It's Not What Happens To You, It's What You Do About It.* In 1971, a flaming motorcycle accident took W. Mitchell's fingers, his face and nearly his life. In 1975, while piloting his own airplane to an emergency landing, he was paralyzed and confined to a wheelchair while four passengers walked away. W. Mitchell turned adversity into opportunity and rebuilt his life. His inspirational story promises to help operators and other foodservice and lodging professionals.

□ *It's Not That Easy Being Green.* The environment is the catchword of the '90s, but instituting measures to help the environment can be difficult. Presenters including Bill Dover of Red Lobster of Canada, Bud Rusitzky of Serv-Rite Corporation in Rochester, New York, and Cathy Nelson of Rooney's Lobster House in Chicago will explain in detail environmental measures taken over the years and recent steps to deal with recycling, solid waste and the environment.

□ *Don't Lose Your Restaurant by Accident.* Case histories that outline some costly and avoidable accidents rival Ripley's *Believe It Or Not.* Amazing stories include the waiter's tray case ($4 million), the missing chair screw ($2.5 million) and the shot customer ($1.1 million). Learn accident-prevention practices and gain an understanding of liability law. Presented by Dr. Tony Marshall, Dean of the School of Hospitality Management at Florida International University.

□ *How to Maintain Turnover Below 50%, Do Double the Volume of Competitors, All Without Advertising.* Keith Dunn of the successful McGuffey's Restaurants proves that even the seemingly impossible can be accomplished. Dunn outlines an employee motivation system that reduces turnover, a service system that conditions a culture of "the answer is yes," and a method that allows personal name recognition of 30–50% of their 30,000 guests per week.

□ *Honest Work.* Learn how to make your job and the work of your employees more meaningful. Joanne Ciulla, professor at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and author of *Honest Work*, discusses the meanings and values associated with work in America and stresses the importance of business ethics to our society and to the fulfillment of personal success.

□ *How to Make Stress Work for You.* Learn 10 tools for effectively handling stress at work from Peter G. Hanson, M.D., a world-renowned lecturer, family doctor, daily radio program host and author of hundreds of articles and two highly acclaimed books. His international best-seller, *The Joy of Stress*, taught millions that stress is not the killer we assumed. Correctly managed, stress can be the missing key to excellence.

□ *The Psychology Factor.* Back by popular demand, Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute, explores the psychological significance of colors. Learn how this knowledge can help you conceptualize, design and revitalize your restaurant or hotel furnishings, tableware or menu.

□ *Butkus!* Former pro football star and native Chicago South Sider Dick Butkus will add his humor and insight to the Theatre Series as he discusses his success as both athlete and actor.

Management Clinic

Monday through Wednesday, May 20–22

□ *What's My Restaurant Got to Do With Saving the Earth?* Learn ways to adjust to the new realities of an environmentally conscious marketplace, complete with how to get started and how to work with vendors to bring them in line. With Gil Friend, a specialist in ecosystem management and consultant to the best-selling book *50 Simple Things You Can Do to Save the Earth.*

□ *Positioning for Success.* Positioning is the key to shaping customer perceptions. Whether your business is a one-unit operation or a chain, foodservice consultant Linda Tobey provides a way to maximize your marketing efforts in this practical, example-filled session.

□ *Are You Listening?* Correct listening is central to working with people. Dr. Marvin Glock, professor emeritus at Cornell University and one of the early researchers, writers and teachers on listening skills, teaches attendees to communicate more effectively, avoid undesired responses and increase both self-confidence and confidence in others.

□ *Creative Recruiting: Beyond the Classifieds.* Attending this seminar may forever change the way you approach recruitment. Carolyn B. Thompson teaches you to view everyone as a "hot prospect" for employment. Discover exciting ideas on where to find potential employees and how to make them want to work with you and your company.

□ *Hotel Guest Service.* This practical how-to shop talk covers the intricacies of a complete hotel guest service program. The presenters, management representatives from a variety of hotel departments (concierge, QA, front office), explore the challenge of providing quality service on an hour-to-hour basis.

□ *Healthy Cookin' That'll Put Some Spice in Your Life.* Learn to create attractive, flavorful, nutritious menu se-

Jane Brody **Richard Nelson** **Leatrice Eiseman** **Joe Charbonneau**

lections, especially from favorite less-healthful recipes. With Dr. Sandy Kapoor of the Center for Hospitality Management at Cal Poly Pomona.

□ *How to Save Water, Save Money and Build Up Sexual Awareness*. Gain practical, operations-oriented information on proper conservation. Discover how community relations and recycling can improve sales and save real dollars. With Mike Amos of Applebee's in Arizona.

□ *Perspective Is Everything*. Dr. Ray Goodman of the Department of Hotel Administration at the University of New Hampshire contrasts service expectations from a guest's and an employee's point of view. Learn why differences occur and how managers and owners can train employees to deliver service the way guests, not employees, want it.

□ *Participative Employee Relations*. Carole Kohn of the Loews Anatole Hotel in Dallas describes the Anatole's innovative "Township" program. It involves all employees in the development, planning, budgeting and implementation of all employee relations programs. This presentation proves the value of concepts like recognition, communication, employee pride and image, involvement and awareness.

□ *Quality Training on $1.99 a Day*. Hard to believe, but true. This lively clinic discusses how to develop cost-effective, high-impact training and support materials. Many ideas are applicable to both management and hourly employee training. And each item discussed has an average cost per day of $1.99 or less! With Dennis Minchella of Morrison's Inc.

□ *PRIDE Means Never Having to Say You're Sorry*. PRIDE stands for Personal Responsibility In Delivering Excellence. William Wicker of Bruegger's Bagel Bakery outlines a successful contest involving mystery shoppers and employee training.

PRE-SHOW SEMINARS: ANOTHER SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

It takes a lot more than luck to make it in today's market. Operational expertise, strong professional management skills and keen industry insight can make or break your operation in the 1990s. And the place to gain all this and more is the pre-Show seminar lineup presented by the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association.

Truly too good to pass up, pre-Show seminars cover 16 of the hottest topics, trends and techniques in the industry. Attending any one of these could be the experience that sends you home inspired and revolutionizes your operation. Seminars are offered Saturday, May 18, and Sunday, May 19, preceeding the opening of the Show. All seminars begin at 10 a.m. and are held on the lower level of McCormick Place North, adjacent to the complimentary shuttle bus drop-off site.

Seminar registration fees are separate from the cost of general admission to the Show and include course materials and a certificate of completion from the educational foundation. In addition, the seminars are approved for continuing-education credits by many industry associations.

Registration fees for pre-Show seminars vary. The 2-day SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation Seminar is $200 for one person and $175 per person for multiple attendees. Full-day course registration is $150 for one person and $125 for multiple attendees. Half day seminars run $75 for one attendee and $65 per person for multiple attendees.

The pre-Show seminar lineup for the 72nd National Restaurant Association Show includes:

□ *SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation Certification*. Don't miss this opportunity to attend the nation's leading sanitation training and certification program presented in a two-day workshop. Learn valuable food safety practices in preparation for the SERVSAFE/AFS certification exam. Individuals passing the exam receive a certificate of completion. (Certification requirements vary by jurisdiction.) Deadline for registration is May 1.

□ *Banquet Management*. Learn the key ingredients in creating and maintaining a profitable banquet program. Topics include rating banquet profitability, creating exciting menus and developing personnel.

□ *Dining Room Management*. Management and staff benefit from basic management skills and a program to produce an efficient front-of-the-house staff. Topics covered include customer relations, employee motivation and personnel administration.

□ *Food Cost Management*. Learn to reduce food costs by at least 1 percent using an analytical, problem-solving approach to identify actual and ideal food use. Forms and management tools needed to implement this valuable cost-control program are provided.

□ *Kitchen Management*. Owners, managers and staff discover the key ingredients for running an efficient back of the house. Topics include streamlining purchasing, reducing food cost, improving food preparation and increasing quality.

□ *The Labor Issue*. From creating an active recruitment plan and a high-quality training program to successfully retaining employees, participants learn ways to beat the labor crunch.

□ *Profitability*. A blueprint for improving profits at the unit level. Learn a variety of operating systems, management techniques and cost-control tips that can be implemented in any full-service operation.

□ *Promoting Your Restaurant*. Learn to create an effective promotional plan based on a strong community marketing campaign. Uncover ways to increase sales using direct mail, promotions, publicity and by tapping into local resources.

□ *Successful Buffet Management*. A review of the basics of buffet service with an emphasis on creative menus, decor, preparation and presentation, cost control and staff motivation. Applicable to any size operation.

□ *Theft Control*. Management behavior and procedures are the influencing factors in controlling employee and customer theft. Attendees learn to identify methods of theft and to control theft through operational procedures and increased security.

Special additions to the pre-Show seminar lineup this year:

□ *Legal Issues for Foodservice Operators*. Gain insight into the legal problems of the industry. Topics include handling negligence cases, employee discrimination, breach of contract, government antitrust laws and health violations.

□ *SERVSAFE/Serving Alcohol Safely*. The new SERVSAFE alcohol safety program promotes responsible alcohol service training for managers and servers. This manager-training

seminar teaches attendees the laws concerning service to minors and intoxicated customers. Learn to recognize intoxicated customers and levels of intoxication, to develop written guidelines for servers, and to implement a procedure for providing intoxicated customers with alternatives.

□ *SERVSAFE/Train-the-Trainer.* Individuals who received the Foundation's SERVSAFE/AFS certification can learn to conduct their own food-safety training program. This seminar introduces attendees to all the new *SERVSAFE/Serving Safe Food* training materials. Attendees learn presentation skills to help students retain information and tips on motivating student participation.

□ *Service That Sells.* 50 guaranteed ways to improve service, increase sales and reduce turnover. Transforming "order-takers" into service-oriented salespeople is the key to increasing sales and customer satisfaction. Discover important selling techniques, tips for motivating employees and techniques for improving customer relations.

□ *Stress Management.* Burnout, the number-one cause of turnover among foodservice management, is often reflected in the service received by customers. Learn operational and personal tips for preventing and recognizing on-the-job burnout.

□ *Train-the-Trainer.* Establishing comprehensive training programs means reduced employee and management turnover, improved customer service and increased sales. This seminar teaches owners and managers to identify their organization's training needs and implement a training program that will benefit the entire staff.

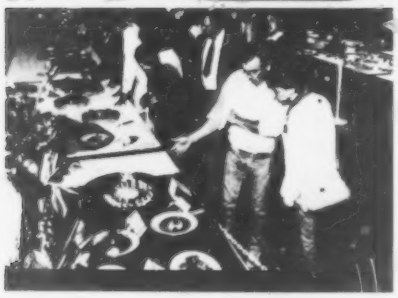
For further information on pre-Show seminars write to the Educational Foundation Customer Service Department, 250 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60606, or call (800) 765-2122.

NOTE: Advance registration is recommended to ensure availability of space and training materials.

CULINARY ARTS SALON

Now 21 years old and still the leading showcase for the latest cold-food culinary presentations, the Culinary Arts Salon is the largest cold-food display of its kind, covering 4,000 square feet of display table space.

Attendees see fanciful marzipan creations, exquisite wedding cakes, spun-sugar sculptures and cold-food displays that can only be considered works of art—all set off to perfection in the beautiful Chicago Room of McCormick Place East, Sunday, May 19, through Tuesday, May 21.



Approximately 200 chefs will fill 4,000 square feet of table space with their culinary creations at the 21st annual Culinary Arts Salon.

Highlights of this year's Salon include an intrasquad competition among the regional teams of the 1992 Culinary Team USA and a special "Works in Marzipan" category in which chefs are judged in four categories: out-of-town professionals, out-of-town student apprentices, best of Chicago professionals and best of Chicago student apprentices.

Eminent chefs and foodservice professionals serve as judges, evaluating entries and naming winners in the following categories: Grand Prize, Pastry Display; Best of Show; Most Original Piece of Show; Judges' Special Award and Best Entry from a Junior Culinarian. Winners will be announced at award ceremonies at McCormick Place East on Sunday, May 19.

The annual National Restaurant Association Culinary Arts Salon is recognized and endorsed by the American Culinary Federation and the ACF-Chicago Chefs of Cuisine.

SECRETARY OF AIR FORCE TO SPEAK AT HENNESSY AWARDS LUNCHEON

Expect pomp and circumstance and an impressive display of leaders from the Air Force and foodservice at the 35th Annual Hennessy Awards Luncheon, the hospitality industry's annual tribute to military foodservice. Dr. Donald B. Rice, the Secretary of the Air Force, will be the luncheon guest speaker at the Hyatt Regency Chicago on Saturday, May 18, at 11:30 p.m.

Before accepting his appointment by President Bush as the Secretary of the Air Force, Dr. Rice was the president and chief executive officer of The RAND Corp., an independent, nonprofit, public-service institution which conducts research and analysis on problems of national security and domestic affairs and sponsors doctoral degree programs in several fields of public policy.

Earlier positions held by Rice include assistant director in the Office of Management & Budget, deputy assistant secretary of defense for resource analysis and director of cost analysis in the office of the secretary of defense.

The annual Hennessy Award is bestowed in honor of John (Lawrence) Hennessy, a civilian long recognized for his advancement of military foodservice.

Each year a panel of distinguished foodservice and military executives single out Air Force bases for excellence in the management, preparation and service of food to military personnel. The competition is divided into two main categories, single unit and multiple unit, with special award categories for the Air Force Reserves and the Air National Guard.

Tickets for the Hennessy Awards Luncheon are $40 and may be purchased through Mary Garnett at the National Restaurant Association, 1200 17th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. Or call (202) 331-5966.

#116

"But on the other hand . . ."

On a recent cross-country flight, my seatmate and I struck up a conversation. He told me he was the chief economist for one of the nation's prestigious think tanks. We chatted for a while, but then I reclined my seat and my eyes got heavy and *zzzzz*. All of a sudden I found myself talking with the economist again.

Me: Where do you think the economy is headed?

Economist: It may go up, but on the other hand, it could go down. It's a very interesting time. There's been no other time like it.

Me: Do you think the recession we're in will be long and deep, or short and shallow?

Economist: There are a lot of signals that point to a mild recession. Companies are leaner and more productive thanks to downsizing, or as some people term it, "rightsizing." But on the other hand, it could be severe, as the unemployment rate is somewhat high and some financial institutions are shaky, which affects credit availability.

Me: Does the unsettled international scene influence our economy very much?

Economist: That's a very good question. Very good question. Exports are affected negatively when the international community is in disarray, and it can cause upward pressure on oil prices. On the other hand, people at home still need the staples of food, utilities, pharmaceuticals and so forth.

Me: Are you saying that crises and turmoil bring opportunities in the stock market?

Economist: In any economic, political and social climate there are always stocks that are undervalued and those that are overvalued. But on the other hand, the stock market is all psychological, not numerical, as far as I'm concerned.

Me: What do you mean it's all psychological?

Economist: I'm speaking in general terms, of course, but the irony of the market is that when people think we are in a recession and that times are bad, they act that way, and the market goes down. But on the other hand, when people think that there is light at the end of the tunnel and that the down cycle is turning around, the stock market goes up. I got this theory third-hand, so to speak, from a friend of a friend. Actually, he's a barber who does the hair of some noted psychologists.

Me: Is inflation a problem in the immediate future?

Economist: Well, it shouldn't be, but on the other hand, it could be. Interest rates are trending down, which is good for borrowers since that reduces the cost of money, which helps construction and rebuilding of inventories. But on the other hand, a lot of our national debt, which is now $3.3 trillion, is financed by overseas investors such as the Japanese and the Germans. Lower interest rates are not attractive to them, so they may not buy our government securities unless interest rates go up. It's all political as far as I'm concerned.

Me: What do you mean it's all political? I thought you said it was all psychological?

Economist: I'm speaking in general terms, of course, but it's the stock market that's psychological. The vagaries of interest rates are political, not numerical, as far as I'm concerned.

Me: What do you mean by that?

Economist: Well, the Federal Reserve Board is an independent body, technically, and they control the central bank function, supposedly immune from political party pressure. But on the other hand, those governors live in the real world and read and listen to the news reports just as you and I do. In business and economic circles there is always as much interest in the appointment of a new governor to the Federal Reserve Board as there is interest in the general population when a new Supreme Court justice is appointed.

Me: What about the national debt that we have? You said it was $3.3 trillion. With a U.S. population of 250 million, that's a debt load of more than $13,000 for every man, woman and child in the country. That's staggering!

Economist: Well, that is a 13-digit number, and I can see why you and others are concerned. Somebody is going to have to pay that someday. And interest on that debt is the fastest-growing component of the federal budget, and that's bad. But on the other hand, we have a $6 trillion economy, and the addition to the national debt each year (which is each year's federal deficit) is a shrinking percentage of each year's gross national product. That's good.

Me: Using a metaphor, I think you've just told me we're sinking more slowly, but we're still sinking.

Economist: I'm speaking in general terms, of course, but on the other hand, you do seem to have grasped the point.

Me: Well, what about tax rates. What is the outlook there?

Economist: Taxes will do one of two things. They will either go up or they will go down. But on the other hand, they could stay the same. I'm speaking in general terms, of course. It could be good if higher taxes were earmarked for debt reduction rather than increased spending, but on the other hand, it would be bad because increased taxes could draw money out of the economy that otherwise would be spent by consumers and businesses, which in turn would stimulate the economy. It's all philosophical, not numerical, as far as I'm concerned.

Me: What do you mean it's philosophical? You say the stock market is psychological, that interest-rate decisions are political, and now you say taxes are philosophical. You are an economist. Isn't anything economical?

Economist: Oh, it's all economical, so to speak. Economics threads through all those things and many more as well. I'm speaking in general terms, of course.

Me: Who are you going to speak to at your destination?

Economist: I've been asked to address the annual meeting of the Procrastinators' Clubs of America. They're the people who make a virtue out of putting things off.

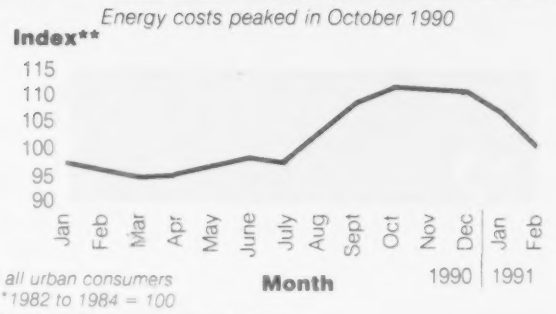
The crackle of the flight attendant's landing announcement startled me, and I realized I had been dreaming. This conversation never really took place. I did note, however, that my economist seatmate was talking to the passenger across the aisle. He was saying, "I'm speaking in general terms, of course, but on the other hand . . ."

Fisher's Law #116: There is a good reason why economics is known as the "dismal science." What does that make economists?

Restaurateurs are conserving energy

An association survey of tableservice operators reveals that restaurateurs are adopting a variety of measures to conserve energy at their establishments. According to the Consumer Price Index, energy costs advanced a hefty 15.1 percent in 1990, compared with an overall inflation rate of 5.4 percent.

Consumer Price Index (CPI)* for energy
1990 to early 1991



* all urban consumers
**1982 to 1984 = 100
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

A recent National Restaurant Association tableservice-operator survey shows that restaurateurs are taking steps to conserve energy. According to survey results, more than four in 10 tableservice operators reported that they have modified lighting fixtures for energy-conservation purposes. In addition, about 25 percent reported that they have installed heat-recovery equipment on refrigeration and air conditioners. As energy and environmental issues continue to grow in importance, tableservice restaurateurs have acted to conserve energy and also to preserve the environment. Nearly one-third of tableservice respondents report that they have sponsored community conservation activities.

1990 energy costs jump

Driven by the crisis in the Persian Gulf, energy costs in 1990 as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) jumped more than 15 percent. In comparison, energy costs advanced a lower 5.6 percent in 1989.

Analysis of the CPI energy index in 1990 shows that energy costs on a monthly basis actually declined through the first quarter of 1990. However, the start of the Persian Gulf crisis in August 1990 had an immediate and dramatic effect on energy prices—especially gasoline. Between July and October 1990, energy costs advanced almost 13 percent, with gasoline prices up by more than 15 percent during the same period. Since October 1990, energy and gasoline costs have edged downward. Still, gasoline costs in January 1991 were up 19 percent compared with a year earlier.

Restaurant utility costs escalating

The association's *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990* confirms the importance that utility and energy costs play within restaurant operating expenses. For full-menu tableservice operators, median utility expenses in 1989 were $174 per seat, or 3.2 percent of total sales. At limited-menu, no tableservice (fast food) operations, median utility expenses were $194 per seat, or 3.1 percent of total sales.

Considering that the median pretax income as a ratio to total sales for full-menu tableservice establishments was 3.2 percent in 1989, monitoring and controlling utility expenditures can help improve an operator's bottom-line results. Utility expenses were the fifth-highest controllable expense at full-menu tableservice establishments in 1989—higher than advertising and promotion costs, repair and maintenance expenditures, and music and entertainment expenses.

A special analysis of the 1990 industry operations survey data indicates that even before the August 1990 energy price shock,

Percent of tableservice restaurants taking specific conservation steps by dinner check size per person

More than two out of five operators have modified their lighting fixtures to conserve energy

	Dinner check size per person			
Action taken	**Less than $8**	**$8 to $14.99**	**$15 to $24.99**	**$25 or more**
Modified lighting fixtures	46%	44%	40%	46%
Installed heat-recovery equipment on refrigeration and air conditioners	31	22	21	23
Installed low-water warewashers and/or toilet fixtures	35	34	46	32
Served water to patrons only if asked	51	44	35	28
Sponsored community conservation activities	29	28	29	30

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Tableservice Trends 1991*

Changes in Consumer Price Index (CPI)* by selected expenditure category 1989–1990

Gasoline costs jumped more than 14 percent in 1990

Category	Percent change 1989–1990
Gasoline	14.1%
Medical care	9.0
Food at home	6.5
Transportation	5.6
All items	**5.4**
Housing	4.8
Food away from home	4.7
Entertainment	4.7
Apparel	4.6

** all urban consumers*

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Full-menu tableservice controllable expenses 1989

Utility costs are a large component of a restaurant's controllable expenses

Controllable expense	Amount per seat*
Payroll	$1,544
Direct operating expenses	297
Employee benefits	273
Administrative and general	185
Utilities	**174**
Advertising and promotion	104
Repairs and maintenance	95
Music and entertainment	16

** median values*

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990*

operators' utility costs were escalating. On the basis of respondent establishments that reported operating data for two consecutive years, full-menu tableservice restaurants experienced a 6 percent advance in utility costs between 1988 and 1989. This advance was larger than that experienced for payroll expenses.

Supply overview

According to the Energy Information Administration (EIA), crude oil still accounts for one-fourth of our nation's energy production, and U.S. reliance on foreign oil imports has increased to compensate for declining domestic crude-oil production. Crude-oil imports from the Persian Gulf area have risen dramatically. In 1985, U.S. net imports from the Persian Gulf were 304,000 barrels per day. By comparison, in early 1990, U.S. net imports from the Persian Gulf exceeded 2 million barrels a day. Meanwhile, U.S. crude-oil production has declined from 9 million barrels per day in 1985 to around 7 million barrels per day in 1990.

Although crude oil plays an important role in meeting U.S. energy needs, its use varies by industries. For the United States, oil use is concentrated in the transportation sector. As a result of the Persian Gulf crisis, 1990 motor oil prices (especially gasoline) escalated rapidly. Natural gas prices were less affected.

In addition, a fundamental structural change in our nation's energy production has occurred over the past 15 years. According to EIA, coal (primarily used to generate electricity) accounted for almost one-third (32 percent) of U.S. energy production in 1989. Natural gas ranked a close second (30 percent), followed by crude oil (24 percent). By comparison, in 1975, natural gas ranked first (27 percent), followed by crude oil (30 percent) and coal (25 percent).

What this means to restaurant operators is that their total energy and utility costs are dependent upon the mix of the various energy commodities that their restaurant uses. Consequently, many restaurant operators will probably continue and expand their energy conservation efforts and more closely examine their operations' primary sources of energy supply.

—Hudson Riehle

A review of employee turnover rates

The National Restaurant Association has compiled data on employee turnover rates from its annual restaurant industry operations survey. For the first time, turnover data is available for both salaried and hourly employees.

According to the association's 1990 industry operations survey, limited-menu, no tableservice (fast food) operators reported the highest employee turnover rate* in 1989: 140 percent. In comparison, cafeterias experienced the lowest employee turnover rate at 71 percent.

Full-menu tableservice operators reported an annual employee turnover rate of 109 percent, while limited-menu tableservice establishments posted a slightly higher employee turnover rate of 112 percent.

**derived from the number of W-2s distributed and the number of employees working during a typical week*

Higher turnover for hourly workers

For the first time, the association's annual operations survey provides employee-turnover data for both salaried and hourly employees. For all restaurant categories surveyed (full-menu tableservice, limited-menu tableservice, fast food and cafeterias), the annual turnover rate for hourly employees was noticeably higher than for salaried em-

ployees. With the exception of fast food establishments, the annual turnover rate for hourly workers was more than double that for salaried individuals.

In 1989, full-menu tableservice operators reported an annual salaried turnover rate of 50 percent, compared with 119 percent for hourly employees. Cafeterias posted an annual salaried turnover rate of 44 percent, versus 90 percent for hourly employees. Fast food survey participants reported the highest salaried turnover rate in 1989: 100 percent.

Other highlights

□ Turnover was generally lower when the ratio of part-time to full-time employees was lower. For example, at full-menu tableservice establishments, part-time employees accounted for 59 percent of all workers. Among limited-menu, no tableservice survey participants, part-time workers accounted for a larger 71 percent of the workforce. Compared with the 1988 data, the median number of part-time workers remained stable at full-menu tableservice establishments in 1989 while declining at limited-menu, no tableservice operations.

□ Despite slight changes in the operations survey that make prior-year turnover rates not strictly comparable, it appears that annual employee turnover rates declined somewhat between 1988 and 1989. For example, in 1988 full-menu tableservice operators reported an annual employee turnover rate of 120 percent compared with a slightly lower 109 percent for 1989. Fast food establishments posted an annual employee turnover rate of 180 percent in 1988 versus a lower 140 percent for 1989.

□ Among full-menu tableservice survey participants, turnover rates varied substantially by average check size per person. In general, at establishments with larger average checks, the turnover rate for salaried employees was higher when compared with the hourly-employee turnover rate. The opposite was true at establishments with smaller average checks. For instance, operations with an average check of less than $5 reported an annual salaried-employee turnover rate of 67 percent, compared with 136 percent for hourly employees. In comparison, full-menu tableservice establishments with an average check of $15 or more reported a salaried-employee turnover rate of 112 percent, versus 50 percent for hourly employees.

Annual employee turnover rates,* 1989

Turnover among salaried employees was lower than among hourly workers

Type of establishment	All employees	Salaried employees	Hourly employees
□ Full-menu tableservice	109%	50%	119%
Sales volume			
Less than $500,000	94	50	100
$500,000 to $999,999	130	67	134
$1,000,000 to $1,999,999	121	50	133
$2,000,000 or more	99	36	104
Profit versus loss			
Restaurants reporting net profit	118	50	128
Restaurants reporting net loss	131	67	139
□ Limited-menu, no tableservice	140	100	146
Sales volume			
Less than $200,000	120	100	130
$200,000 to $399,999	155	100	163
$400,000 to $599,999	137	50	147
$600,000 or more	171	67	181
Profit versus loss			
Restaurants reporting net profit	163	100	167
Restaurants reporting net loss	160	**	175

* *median values*
** *insufficient data*

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990*

Number of full and part-time employees by type of establishment and sales volume,* 1989

Type of establishment	Full-time employees	Part-time employees (20 to 35 hrs.)**	Part-time employees (less than 20 hrs.)**
□ Full-menu tableservice	14	12	8
Sales volume			
Less than $500,000	9	8	6
$500,000 to $999,999	12	10	7
$1,000,000 to $1,999,999	22	20	11
$2,000,000 or more	47	30	18
□ Limited-menu, no tableservice	5	6	6
Sales volume			
Less than $200,000	4	5	5
$200,000 to $399,999	4	5	5
$400,000 to $599,999	6	6	5
$600,000 or more	7	13	10

* *median values*
** *per week*

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990*

To order the report

The *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990* (CS955) presents annual employee-turnover statistics for full-menu tableservice operations, fast food, limited-menu tableservice operations and cafeterias. Data is available by menu theme, location, average check size, profit, sales volume, affiliation and type of establishment. The report also contains a wealth of other useful operating and financial data. Copies are available to association members for $39 and to nonmembers for $72. This includes shipping and handling charges (overseas orders require a 20 percent surcharge). All orders must be prepaid.

You may order by sending a check or money order to the National Restaurant Association Publications Department, 1200 17th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. For credit-card orders, call the association's information service and library between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Eastern Time) at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960.

□ Among fast food operators, establishments with annual sales of $600,000 or more reported the highest turnover rate for hourly employees: 181 percent. Establishments with annual sales of less than $200,000 posted an hourly-employee turnover rate of 130 percent.

□ For full-menu tableservice establishments, operations located in an office building posted the highest employee turnover rate (141 percent), followed by locations in a shopping center or mall (122 percent).

—*Hudson Riehle*

Update on shopping-center restaurants

Restaurants have become an integral part of many shopping centers, and shopping-center restaurants average higher profits, sales and table turns than sole-occupant restaurants.

Although shopping centers are hardly a novelty, it appears that customers' fascination with them has not faded. According to the National Research Bureau, the number of shopping centers in the United States grew 14.3 percent between 1986 and 1988, from 28,496 to 32,563. Over the same period, retail sales at these centers advanced 15.2 percent, from $556.5 billion in 1986 to $641.1 billion in 1988. (By comparison, total retail sales from all outlets grew by a somewhat lower 13.8 percent between 1986 and 1988.)

But with this growth in the number of centers, there is increased competition to lure shoppers. As a result, many centers are placing an emphasis on foodservice as a marketing tool. Not only does having restaurants in the shopping center mean that shoppers can satisfy their hunger pangs without leaving the premises, but restaurants are also lucrative tenants.

Restaurants convert visits to sales

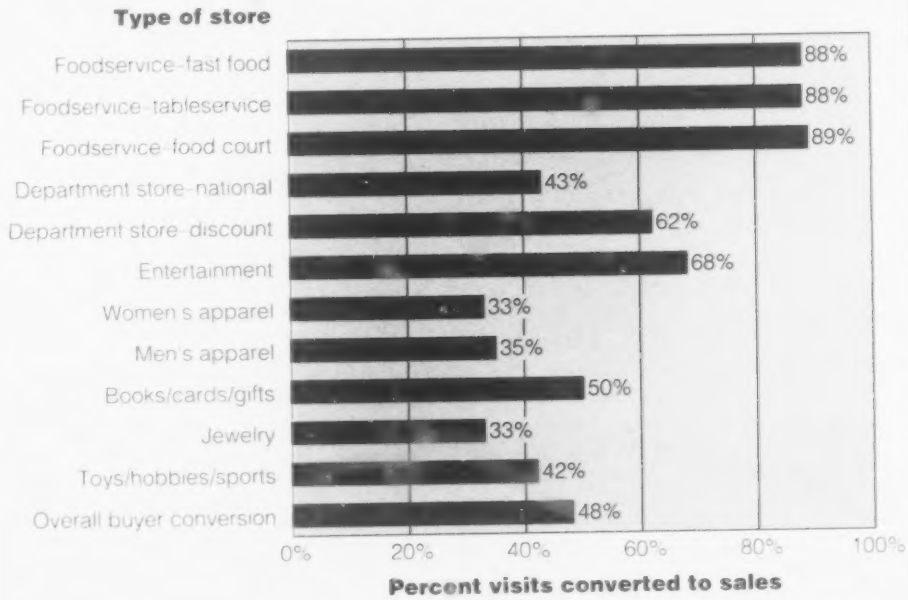
The buyer conversion rate measures the percentage of visits that are converted to sales. According to Stillerman Jones & Company's *National Benchmarks, 1991,** foodservice establishments had the highest buyer conversion rates of any shopping-center tenants. Needless to say, people don't browse at a restaurant or food court the way they do in a department store. Roughly nine out of 10 visits to a foodservice establishment within a shopping center in 1990 ended in a sale.

Among non-foodservice outlets, drug/variety stores (70 percent conversion

* *The 1991 Stillerman Jones & Co. publication* National Benchmarks *represents a summary of consumer characteristics and shopping habits of more than 35,400 shopper-intercept surveys conducted at Stillerman Jones & Co.'s client shopping centers nationwide.* Benchmark *data are updated on an annual basis and reflect a rolling average.*

Buyer conversion rates at shopping center stores in 1990

Foodservice outlets fair better than other retailers in converting visits to sales



Source: Stillerman Jones & Co., *National Benchmarks, 1991.*

Location matters

All locations are not created equal when it comes to shopping-center restaurants. Data from the Urban Land Institute's *Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers, 1990* indicates that both sales and rent per square foot of gross leasable area (GLA) vary greatly for fast food/carryout restaurants in super-regional shopping centers.*

For example, although rents were highest in center court locations ($36.20 per square foot), sales were highest for fast food places located in side-mall locations ($368.67 per square foot). And although both sales ($204.78 per square foot) and rents ($16.72 per square foot) were lowest for fast food restaurants located in anchor courts, rent as a percentage of sales was also the lowest (8.2 percent).

Sales and rent for fast food/carryout restaurants, by shopping-center location

Sales were highest at side-mall locations, and rents were highest at center-court locations

Location	Sales*	Rent*
All locations	$278.83	$26.52
Center court	346.12	36.20
Anchor court	204.78	16.72
Main mall	234.71	21.15
Side mall	368.67	34.59

*median values per square foot of gross leasable area for 1990 at super-regional centers

Source: Urban Land Institute *Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers, 1990*

** The Urban Land Institute defines a super-regional shopping center as one that offers extensive general merchandise, apparel, furniture and home furnishings and has at least three full-line department stores, each occupying no less than 100,000 square feet.*

rate), entertainment outlets (68 percent conversion) and discount department stores (62 percent conversion) also performed well. For the most part, however, mall stores did not fare as well. Overall buyer conversion among all stores was 48 percent, and of the 26 types of retail outlets studied, 14 had buyer conversion rates below the 48 percent average for all stores.

Higher profits, sales and costs

Data from the National Restaurant Association's *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990* indicates that both full-menu tableservice and limited-menu, no tableservice (fast food)

Spotlight on food courts

Food courts have become an attraction in many shopping centers, allowing consumers to select items from a number of different food outlets. According to the *1990 CARLSONREPORT Food Court Survey*, food-court sales advanced 24 percent in 1990. Of the 16 food categories covered in the CARLSONREPORT survey, 13 reported double digit increases in average unit sales volume, and only one (ice cream) posted a decline in unit sales. Barbecue restaurants led the way with a 68 percent increase in average unit sales, followed by potatoes (up 54 percent) and seafood (up 47 percent).

Among food-court tenants, chicken restaurants had the highest average unit sales in 1990 ($557,545) followed by hamburger ($472,665) and pizza ($389,957) restaurants. Chicken restaurants accounted for the largest share of food-court sales (11.44 cents per dollar). Chicken, hamburger and pizza sales combined to make up almost one-third of all food-court purchases.

The other notable change in food courts in 1990, according to CARLSONREPORT, was the growth in presence of national chains among food-court tenants. In 1989, 33 percent of food courts had more local than national tenants. In 1990, the percentage fell to 4 percent.

A profile of shopping-center patrons

In order to be successful in any location, restaurateurs must be aware of the demographics of their customers. According to Stillerman Jones & Co.'s *National Benchmarks, 1991*, shopping-center patrons had the following demographic characteristics:

- Nearly two out of three shopping-center patrons were women.
- Thirty-one percent of shoppers were between 30 and 44 years old, and an additional 25 percent were between 20 and 29 years old.
- The average shopper had an estimated household income of $38,886. Households with annual income below $15,000 and of $75,000 or more accounted for the smallest shares of all shopping-center patrons (13 percent and 9 percent respectively).
- Nearly six out of 10 shoppers had no children at home.
- Forty-four percent of shoppers visited a shopping center to shop, look around or browse; 30 percent went for a specific purchase.
- Seven out of 10 shopping-center patrons came from home, and 61 percent were going home after leaving the shopping center.
- Half of all shopping-center patrons spent less than one hour at the center; the average patron spent 68 minutes shopping.
- Each shopper spent an estimated $45.65 while in the shopping center. Women spent more on average than men ($48.59 compared with $40.48). Adults between 45 and 54 had the highest estimated expenditure ($57.08), while teenagers between 15 and 19 had the lowest ($27.65).

Operating data for restaurants by location, 1989
Shopping-center restaurants versus sole-occupant restaurants

	Full-menu tableservice		Limited-menu no tableservice	
	In shopping center	Sole occupant	In shopping center	Sole occupant
Average check	$8.54	$9.15	$4.21	$4.14
Average daily seat turnover	1.9	1.5	6.4	2.8
Annual employee turnover rate				
All employees	122%	109%	128%	138%
Salaried employees	67	50	67	100
Hourly employees	134	122	138	148
Number of full-time-equivalent employees	39.5	44.0	14.0	18.5
Sales per full-time-equivalent employee	$21,165	$21,197	$25,692	$24,104
Payroll per full-time-equivalent employee	$ 6,814	$ 7,004	$ 7,525	$ 6,707
Sales per square foot	$ 224	$ 187	$ 278	$ 223
Gross profit per square foot	$ 149	$ 123	$ 194	$ 147

Note: *All values are medians.*

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990*

establishments located in shopping centers have higher profits per square foot than stand-alone (sole occupant) units.

In 1989, full-menu tableservice restaurants located in shopping centers/malls posted a median gross profit of $149 per square foot, compared with $123 per square foot median gross profit for sole-occupant, full-menu tableservice restaurants. The difference was even greater for fast food (limited-menu, no tableservice establishments), as those located in shopping centers reported a median $194 in gross profits per square foot, compared with $147 for sole occupants.

Sales per square foot and total occupation costs per square foot were also higher for restaurants located in shopping centers. Among full-menu tableservice restaurants, those located in shopping centers had median sales of $224 per square foot and median occupation costs of $17.07 per square foot, compared with sales of $187 per square foot and occupation costs of $12.16 per square foot for sole-occupant establishments. Fast food restaurants located in shopping centers had median sales of $278 per square foot and occupation costs of $20.86 per square foot. This compares with sales of $223 per square foot and occupation costs of $12.16 per square foot for sole occupants.

Other differences

Shopping-center restaurants had higher average daily seat turnover than sole-occupant units did (1.9, compared with 1.5 for full-menu tableservice establishments and 6.4, compared with 2.8 for fast food restaurants). Average check size was lower for full-menu tableservice restaurants located in shopping centers than for sole occupants ($8.54 versus $9.15), but the opposite was true for fast food restaurants. Those located in shopping centers had higher average checks than those that were sole occupants ($4.21 versus $4.14).

Employment characteristics differed for shopping-center restaurants and sole occupants, perhaps due to the fact that those located in malls may be open a limited number of hours. For full-menu tableservice establishments, those located in shopping centers had fewer full-time-equivalent employees than did sole-occupant units (39.5 compared with 44.0). Sales and payroll per full-time-equivalent employees were also lower for shopping-center restaurants, and employee turnover was higher.

For limited-menu, no tableservice restaurants, the story was somewhat different. Once again, operations located in shopping centers had fewer full-time-equivalent employees (14.0, compared with 18.5 for sole occupants). However, sales and payroll per full-time-equivalent employee were higher for shopping-center locations than for sole occupants. Employee turnover was lower for shopping-center locations, particularly among salaried employees.

—*Nancy Michalski*

Italian restaurants post continued traffic growth

In 1990, customer traffic at Italian restaurants increased 4 percent, which was double the industry growth rate. Lunch traffic at Italian establishments continued to prosper as America's passion for pasta continued unabated.

According to CREST,* overall Italian-restaurant traffic growth posted healthy gains in 1990, up 4 percent compared with a 2 percent advance for the restaurant industry as a whole. Italian restaurants have shown strong traffic gains compared with the industry since 1986. However, over the past four years, the rate of traffic growth at Italian restaurants has slowed. For example, Italian-restaurant traffic growth was a red-hot 7 percent in 1988.

Much of Italian-restaurant traffic growth has come from the moderate-check upscale restaurant segment, in part due to an expanding number of units. In 1990, moderate-check upscale Italian restaurants represented 42 percent of total Italian-restaurant traffic, up from a 34 percent share in 1986. Midscale Italian restaurants still captured the majority of traffic, registering 52 percent, which was down 7 percentage points compared with 1986. Higher-check upscale restaurants represented a smaller 6 percent share of total Italian-restaurant traffic in 1990, a slight decline from 1986.

Customer counts at moderate-check upscale Italian restaurants jumped in 1990, up 18 percent versus 5 percent for the total moderate-check upscale segment. This compares to a 3 percent decline in traffic at midscale Italian restaurants and a 12 percent decline at higher-check upscale Italian restaurants (see chart).

Counter to the overall industry trend, on-premises traffic growth in Italian restaurants outperformed off-premises growth. In 1990, on-premises traffic at Italian restaurants grew 8 percent compared with a 6 percent decline in off-premises traffic. On-premises traffic at midscale Italian restaurants grew 3 percent compared with a 14 percent decline in off-premises traffic. Still, Italian restaurants had the highest ratio of takeout traffic to total traffic among all midscale concepts (a 32 percent share). In contrast, off-premises traffic at moderate-check upscale Italian places, although only a small portion of traffic, remained strong.

Lunch traffic advanced

Lunch traffic at Italian restaurants continued to prosper during 1990. Traffic for the midday meal was up a strong 16 percent compared with a 1 percent gain for the industry as a whole. However, the shift toward eating in Italian restaurants at noon may have affected dinner customer counts, as traffic for the evening meal advanced a smaller 2 percent.

Despite the advances in lunch traffic, dinner still remained the meal of choice for most Italian-restaurant goers. Dinner accounted for two-thirds of traffic at Italian restaurants in 1990 compared with a lower 41 percent for the overall restaurant industry.

The top ethnic food

According to the National Restaurant Association's *The Market for Ethnic Foods*, one-third (33 percent) of adults rated Italian food (other than pizza) as their favorite ethnic food, making Italian food the top choice. Moreover, nearly half (46 percent) of respondents had eaten Italian food (other than pizza) at restaurants in the past month—more than had eaten any other type of ethnic food in the past month. Three-fourths (76 percent) of customers have tried Italian food in the past.

What are the characteristics of consumers' favorite Italian restaurants? According to study results, large portions, friendly people and service, freshness of ingredients, and quality of food were the top characteristics that adults cited. In contrast, menu variety ranked high in Chinese restaurants and the speed of service ranked high in Mexican restaurants.

According to the study, two-thirds (66 percent) of adults agreed that people would eat more ethnic food in restaurants if the dishes were described better and more accurately on menus. Consequently, it is possible that one way to continue to boost consumer interest in Italian restaurants, as well as in all types of ethnic food, would be to describe dishes more thoroughly.

Who is the typical Italian-cuisine consumer? Survey results indicated that those most likely to have tried Italian food (other than pizza) were patrons 18 to 34 years old, with household incomes of $35,000 or more, and residents of metro areas with populations of 1 million or more.

High check size, low promotion use

CREST data show that the average check size per eater was higher at Italian restaurants than at most other tableservice restaurants. In 1990, midscale Italian res-

CREST stands for Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, a diary survey conducted by the NPD marketing and research companies.

Popularity of ethnic food types at restaurants

More adults report having eaten Italian food at restaurants during the previous month than any other type of ethnic food*

Ethnic food	Percent of adults who have eaten the ethnic food in past month	Percent of adults who have tried the ethnic food in past
Italian	46%	76%
Chinese	45	78
Mexican	41	74
Greek	10	35
French	9	45
Spanish	9	39
Japanese	7	36
German	6	38

*excludes pizza

Source: National Restaurant Association, *The Market for Ethnic Foods*, 1989

Percent change in traffic at Italian restaurants, 1987 through 1990

Italian restaurants have shown strong traffic gains compared with the industry as a whole

	1987	1988	1989	1990
Total Italian	14%	7%	4%	4%
Total industry	4	1	1	2
Midscale Italian	15	5	−1	−3
Total midscale	−1	−2	1	−1
Moderate-check upscale Italian	11	9	15	18
Total moderate-check upscale	2	−3	8	5
Higher-check upscale Italian	17	18	1	−12
Total higher-check upscale	−3	4	−5	−6

Note: *Percent change is over prior year.*
Source: NPD/CREST Annual Household Reports

Favorite menu items at Italian restaurants, 1990

Pasta dishes were popular across the board

	Percent of eater occasions on which food item was included		
Food item	**Midscale Italian**	**Moderate-check upscale Italian**	**Higher-check upscale Italian**
Pizza	39%	15%	3%
Spaghetti	16	21	13
Other pasta	26	44	50
Side-dish salad	27	51	59
Alcoholic beverages	11	24	64

Source: NPD/CREST Annual Household Report, 1990

taurants posted an average check size per eater (excluding tips) that was 25 percent higher than that for total midscale restaurants ($5.93 versus $4.73). Similarly, the average check was higher at moderate-check upscale Italian restaurants ($8.15) than at all moderate-check upscale restaurants ($7.87), and the average check was noticeably higher at higher-check upscale Italian places ($23.57) than for the higher-check upscale segment as a whole ($15.62).

One factor contributing to the higher check size at Italian restaurants was the relatively low use of promotions. In 1990, promotions were used on 13 percent of all eater occasions** in midscale Italian restaurants, on 11 percent of eater occasions in moderate-check upscale Italian places, and on 7 percent of occasions in higher-check upscale Italian places. By comparison, promotions were used on 16 percent of eater occasions in the midscale restaurant segment, 15 percent in moderate-check upscale restaurants, and 13 percent at higher-check upscale restaurants. Also, alcoholic beverages were more likely to be ordered at Italian places, thereby driving check sizes upward.

*** An eater occasion is one meal eaten by one person.*

Favorite Italian foods

Pasta was the most frequently ordered entree at Italian restaurants. In 1990, pasta was included in two out of every five eater occasions at midscale Italian restaurants, and in three out of five eater occasions at both moderate-check and higher-check upscale Italian restaurants. Side-dish salads were included in more than one-fourth of eater occasions at midscale Italian restaurants and in more than half of occasions at upscale Italian places.

Although the incidence of ordering spaghetti at Italian restaurants remained relatively stable between 1989 and 1990, the incidence of ordering other types of pasta surged. In 1990, 26 percent of eater occasions at Italian midscale restaurants included pasta other than spaghetti, up from 21 percent in 1989. Similarly, 44 percent of eater occasions at moderate-check upscale Italian places included pasta other than spaghetti, up from 40 percent in 1989.

Pizza was popular at midscale Italian places (included in two out of five eater occasions), but was ordered less often at upscale Italian places. Alcoholic beverages were more popular at Italian restaurants than at other types of establishments. For example, nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of eater occasions at higher-check upscale Italian restaurants included an alcoholic beverage, compared with about one-third (36 percent) for the higher-check upscale segment as a whole.

Pasta passion

U.S. consumption of pasta has been steadily increasing since 1982. According to the National Pasta Association, in 1990 the estimated consumption of pasta in the United States was 18.4 pounds per person, or 4.6 billion pounds. By comparison, in 1982, the per capita consumption was 12.9 pounds, a total of 3.0 billion pounds. Moreover, the National Pasta Association projects that per capita consumption will reach 30.6 pounds by 2000.

A 1988 survey conducted by the Roper Organization for the National Pasta Association revealed that one-third (30 percent) of Americans said they eat a lot of pasta. More respondents in the Northeast (38 percent) said they eat a lot of pasta than did respondents in the South (24 percent).

Pasta is also popular with the at-home market. According to *Progressive Grocer*, national pasta sales at grocery stores reached $1.6 billion in 1989, an 8 percent increase over 1988. Macaroni dinners and pasta dinners (other than spaghetti) showed particularly strong gains.

—Elizabeth Gordon

Foodservice Market Measure—January 1991

After trending downward in the fall of 1990, the proportion of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day held relatively steady from November 1990 through January 1991. Slightly less than half of all adults, 48 percent, were industry patrons on a typical January 1991 day, versus 50 percent a year earlier. Compared with 12 months prior, on-premises patronage, particularly for lunch, is clearly showing the effect of the economic downturn.

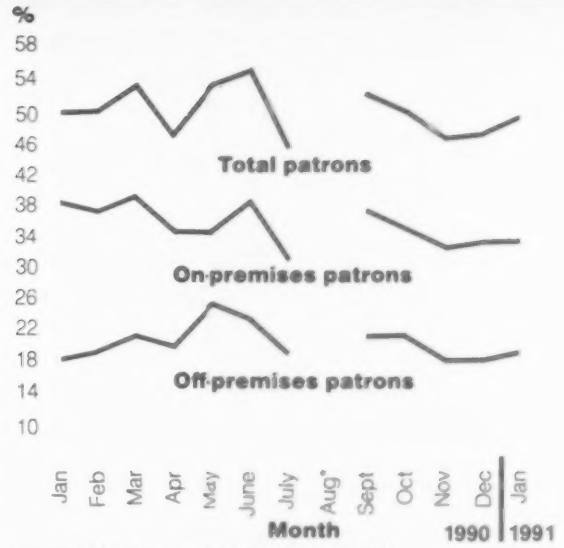
As the unemployment rate climbed to 6.2 percent in January 1991, from 5.2 percent in January 1990, the proportion of adults who were lunch patrons declined from 31 percent to 24 percent. Nevertheless, the 24 percent level has remained unchanged for three months despite rising unemployment. Although the proportion of adults purchasing carry-out lunches was 7 percent this January versus 10 percent a year earlier, most of the decrease occurred in on-premises business. The proportion of adults who reported that they were on-premises lunch patrons on a typical day was 6 percentage points lower than last year, down from 23 percent in January 1990 to 17 percent in January 1991.

In addition to the decrease at lunch, patronage at breakfast was off slightly, and the proportion of adults reporting that they ate an on-premises snack was off from 5 percent in 1990 to just 2 percent in January 1991. In contrast, little change was evident in comparing January 1990 to January 1991 in the proportion of adults who were dinner patrons on a typical day.

The accompanying table shows that significant declines in on-premises patronage in January 1991 versus a year earlier were evident for men, middle-income consumers and those residing in the Midwest.

—*Susan Mills*

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons



*No Market Measure was fielded in August 1990.
Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were on-premises patrons on a typical day by demographics

	January 1990	January 1991	Percentage point change
Sex			
Male	43%	36%	−7*
Female	33	30	−3
Age			
18 to 24 years old	45	46	+1
25 to 34 years old	43	31	−12*
35 to 44 years old	38	31	−7
45 to 54 years old	28	35	+8
55 to 64 years old	47	29	−18*
65 years old and older	29	30	+1
Annual household income			
$40,000 or more	48	42	−6
$20,000 to $39,999	36	25	−9*
Less than $20,000	31	30	−1
Region			
East	32	31	−1
Midwest	42	28	−14*
South	40	36	−4
West	35	38	+3

*significant difference
Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were on-premises patrons on a typical day

Meal period	January 1990	January 1991	Percentage point change
On-premises	38%	33%	−5*
Breakfast	6	4	−2
Lunch	23	17	−6*
Dinner	15	14	−1
Snacks	5	2	−3

*significant difference
Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Foodservice Market Measure

The Foodservice Market Measure is based on 1,000 telephone interviews, conducted by the Gallup Organization each month, with a nationally representative sample of adults age 18 and older. Each person is asked the same questions:

1. Which of the following did you do yesterday?

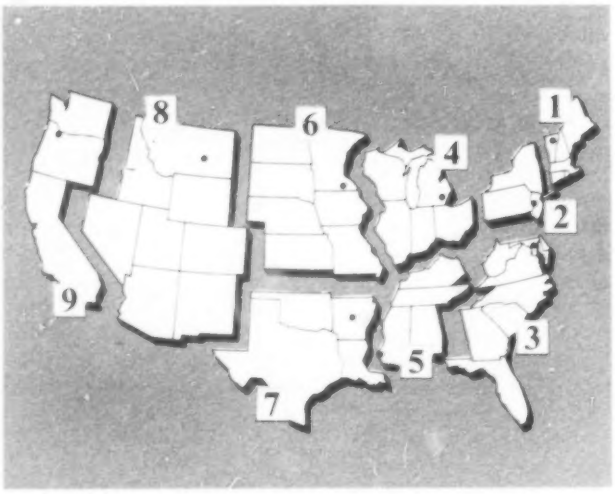
☐ Ate on the premises of a restaurant, fast food place, cafeteria or any other place where you purchased a meal or snack.

☐ Purchased takeout food "to go" or had it delivered.

2. Was the food you ate on premises yesterday for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

3. Was the takeout food you purchased or had delivered for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

The monthly tracking of purchases is supplemented by quarterly inquiries on topics of industry interest.



1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: Lydonville, VT
Association members: Mary and Jim O'Reilly
Operation: The Wildflower Inn
Profile: Inn and upscale restaurant
In business: Inn 5½ years, restaurant 2 years
Seats: 32
Meals served: Breakfast to guests, dinner to public

The slow economy combined with a poor snowfall has brought business down 10 to 20 percent at The Wildflower Inn, says co-owner **Mary O'Reilly.** "The snow hasn't been that good this year, and we usually do a fairly good tourist trade when skiers come to Burke Mountain," she says.

O'Reilly and her husband **Jim** encourage families to stay at the 20-room inn. "I know that's unusual for an inn to encourage families with children to come, but we like to have families here. We have children of our own, and we saw that there was a real market for people who want to enjoy the country but don't want to leave their children behind," O'Reilly says.

The inn is situated on a country road and boasts extensive flower gardens and elaborate landscaping so that guests may commune with nature.

2 MID-ATLANTIC

Location: Mercerville, NJ
Association member: Gary Fuerst
Operation: GreenStreets Restaurant
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 6 years
Seats: 50
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"We're doing pretty good, but we're down from past years like everybody else," says **Gary Fuerst,** general manager of GreenStreets Restaurant. Fuerst is keeping an eye on costs, and he tries to bring customers in with early-bird specials.

The restaurant is off a main road, in the woods, and has a rustic look with a fireplace and country-style decor. The cozy atmosphere makes the establishment especially popular with couples, says Fuerst. During the day, professionals fill the tables for lunch. GreenStreets serves steaks, chops and fresh fish and features eight specials each night.

Fuerst says that a restaurant's two greatest priorities should be "food presentation and service. Most of our staff has been with us for a while, and they provide excellent service," he says.

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Columbia, MD
Association member: Marsha Berman
Operation: Cover to Cover Bookstore Cafe
Profile: Mid to upscale restaurant with adjacent bookstore
In business: 2½ years
Seats: 50
Meals served: Lunch, dinner, Saturday breakfast, Sunday brunch

Reading a book while eating dinner is something people often resort to when dining alone, but at Cover to Cover it's one of the reasons people choose to eat there. Cover to Cover is a bookstore and cafe combined. "People will come in and look around the bookstore and then be lured into the cafe by the aroma. The same is true of diners who go into the bookstore after eating because they saw other people reading interesting books," says manager **Val Slater.**

The quaint establishment offers live music on Friday and Saturday nights. Book browsers and diners are entertained by jazz musicians, folk singers and classical guitar players. Around holidays, the operation receives many reservations for its high-tea service. The tea features scones, finger sandwiches and tea for $6.95.

"We have a lot of two-tops, and the atmosphere is cozy and relaxed, so a lot of couples come in. During the day, we get business-people. At night we get people in their 30s who want to enjoy the music and our large selection of good desserts," says Slater.

4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Walled Lake, MI
Association member: Norman LePage
Operation: Nifty Norman's
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 13 years
Seats: 110
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Right now our business is up about 5 percent, mostly because we're using more promotions," says **Neil Cooley,** general manager. Cooley says they sent out a personal mailer to individual homes with a letter from owner **Norman LePage.** "It was a thank-you letter for their previous business, and we also gave them a gift certificate to use when they come back in," says Cooley. "Because of the economy, people are looking for good deals when they eat out."

At the beginning of this year, the restaurant's concept was changed to that of a family-style restaurant. "During the end of last year, we could tell that things were getting tighter and that we needed to change our concept to attract more business," says Cooley. Less expensive entrees were added to the menu, which features everything from Mexican items to fresh fish, steaks and sandwiches.

Cooley says Nifty Norman's will "stick with the new format for at least a year to gauge how it affects business. But so far it seems to be a change for the better."

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Natchez, MS
Association member: Loveta Byrne
Operation: The Burn
Profile: Bed and breakfast
In business: 9 years
Seats: 80
Meals served: Breakfast for guests, dinner

Tourists wishing to return to the era of the Old South fill The Burn to capacity from March through April. "Our biggest tourist season begins in March with the Old Homes Tour. There are pageants four nights a week, the flowers are blooming and it gives people a chance to relive the glory days of the South," says owner **Loveta Byrne.**

Guests staying in one of the inn's 12 rooms sleep on plump canopy beds in rooms filled with antiques. "The furniture might be chipped a little, but it's the real stuff," says Byrne. A big Southern breakfast greets overnight guests, with homemade biscuits, eggs, plain or cheese grits, bacon, sausage or ham, and homemade preserves.

The Burn also serves dinner to tour groups, local community organizations and companies. Dinner guests get a tour of the house while sipping mint juleps and then sit down to a meal of Byrne's culinary delights. "We try to give them a taste of true Southern hospitality. We want them to feel like they have been invited into someone's home," says Byrne.

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Austin, MN
Association member: Eugene Roden
Operation: Wagon Wheel
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 18 years
Seats: 86
Meal served: Dinner

"Business is generally good, but it was best around 1982–1983 and poorest around 1985," says owner **Eugene Roden.** Wagon Wheel did good business after the Hormel Co. opened a plant in the area in the late '70s that drew in new workers. But a union strike in 1985 caused conflict and unrest in the city, and that rippled into area restaurant business.

The Wagon Wheel is primarily a steak house, but among its dinner entrees are seafood, pork, lamb, veal and chicken items.

Weather conditions play a big part in the operation's business. "We're rural; we're located three miles outside the city. People won't come out in bad weather," Roden says.

Every January, the Wagon Wheel closes, and the owners take a vacation. But even while on vacation, they are thinking of their customers—and of promoting the restaurant. From their vacation site (the Caribbean, Mexico or the southern United States), the owners send personal postcards to their regular customers; 124 were sent this past January.

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Little Rock, AR
Association member: Don Phelan
Operation: Browning's Mexican Express
Profile: Fast food takeout operation
In business: 4 years
Seats: None
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Catering to the public's growing demand for convenience, Browning's Mexican Express serves its customers fast by offering only drive-thru or walk-up service. "It's a small square—about 17 by 21 feet," says manager **Susan Goolsby.** "Only four people can work at one time, and everyone has to be able to get along really well."

Business has been brisk at the operation, attracting the young couples and singles who live in the apartment complexes surrounding the unit. "We get people who are on the go constantly. They like to stop here on the way home from work because they know we have good food at reasonable prices that they can get quick," says Goolsby.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Roundup, MT
Association member: Mark Petrie
Operation: Busy Bee Cafe
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 22 years
Seats: 250
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

When the temperature dipped below zero and stayed there during recent months, business froze as well at the Busy Bee, according to owner **Mark Petrie.** But now that the weather is warming up, people are coming in to redeem coupons that Petrie ran with ads in the local paper. One of the coupons entitles customers to pie and coffee for $1, just the thing to chase away the cold.

In the wintertime, Petrie says that 80 percent of his customers are local, but in the summer the Busy Bee draws many tourists.

The specialty of the house is the salad bar stocked with homemade items. "Our cooks are ranch cooks—they used to cook for ranch hands. We cook roasts every day and make our own gravy, vegetable soup and spaghetti sauce. I think people appreciate the effort to make everything from scratch. It just tastes better," he says.

9 PACIFIC

Location: Portland, OR
Association member: Tiger Warren
Operation: Macheezmo Mouse
Profile: Upscale quickservice chain
In business: 10 years
Seats: 85
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"We're doing pretty good, not bad at all for a brutally tough industry," says owner **Tiger Warren,** with tongue in cheek. Warren founded the Macheezmo Mouse chain with a mission of providing "a new breed of fast food for people who like to feel fit." The operation serves Mexican food that is either grilled, baked or steamed so that it is lower in calories and fat, but still filling.

The concept appealed to Warren because "it's the way I like to eat—hearty food that is healthy for your heart as well. Also, there was nobody out there doing it, so it was niche marketing," says Warren.

The units are spread throughout Seattle, San Francisco and Portland. The name of the restaurant was the result of brainstorming efforts of Warren and some friends. "We couldn't think of a name, so we started to get silly and throw out all these really bad puns. We thought Macheezmo Mouse was funny, so it stuck," he says.

—Jennifer Batty

Cardboard cops cut out crime

Nothing fends off crime better than round-the-clock security, but few businesses can afford such protection. Some innovative Kroger supermarket operators in Dallas, however, have found a way to raise security without raising their budgets. The guards they choose are quiet, attentive and cheap. They're also made of cardboard.

Although at first thought, cardboard cops may seem to lack the punch necessary to have much effect on crime, the life-size stand-up photographs of local officers have been quite successful as deterrents. The cutouts—based on an idea developed by British "bobbies"—are not expected to actually prevent crime but to subtly (or not so subtly) remind customers of the ramifications of shoplifting. When the project began, each "officer" had a sign attached that read "Shoplifting is a crime." Messages can be easily altered to fit a variety of purposes and perpetrations.

Although there is not yet concrete proof that these cardboard cops lower crime rates, both Kroger and a hardware store have reported positive results. Apparently, the sight of a badge—even a cardboard one—is enough to make a would-be offender think twice.

—National Association of Convenience Stores

Coffee for one

For restaurateurs who often end up pouring unsold coffee down the drain, Procter & Gamble may have a solution to save both grounds and dollars.

The company recently introduced Folgers Singles, which are individually wrapped bags of coffee, suitable for plopping into a mug of boiling water. Similar to tea bags, each "single" contains a combination of freeze-concentrated and ground coffee that produce a cupful of brew in a matter of minutes. The bags can be microwaved to make coffee in a matter of seconds.

Although tea bags have been in common use for decades and coffee bags are available in Europe, Folgers is the first major coffee brand to be mass marketed in individual servings in the United States.

—*Advertising Age*

Snooze and fly

Los Angeles is known as a driving city, and for the many locals who frequent its international airport, it's also a parking city—and an expensive one. Marriott Hotels, however, has developed a way to lure those hometown parking dollars away from airport lots and into its own coffers while providing harried travelers with a comfortable alternative to the pre-flight rush.

For about the same price as a week's worth of long-term parking, Angelenos can stay at the L.A. Airport Marriott Hotel the night before a departure and receive deluxe accommodations, a meal for two, complimentary valet parking, free shuttle service to the airport and underground parking for the duration of the trip. The

package has proved popular with early-morning travelers who no longer need worry about traffic jams, construction delays or a long commute in the predawn hours.

The L.A. Airport Marriott also offers guests another special service: ticket-printing machines that allow passengers to alter their flight plans without ever facing an airline ticket counter.

—*Cornell Quarterly*

Zapping the zing from ads

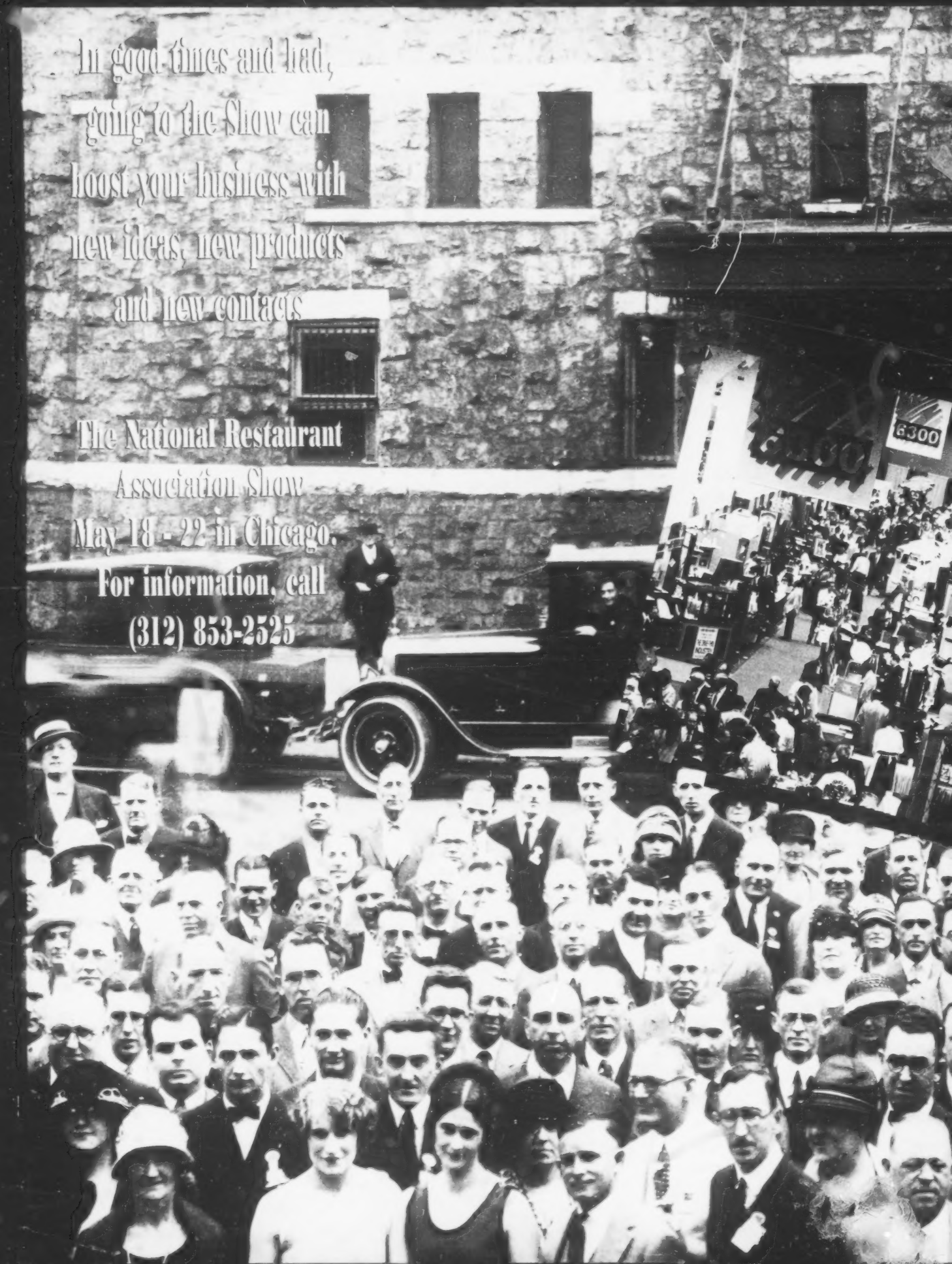
A dark shadow looms before one of the most popular—and most lucrative—advertising arenas: television. The culprit? The VCR.

As technology continues to simplify the videocassette recorder, advertisers fear that more and more commercials will be lost—zapped from the screen with a touch of the fast-forward button. Today, seven out of 10 households own VCRs, but they are used mainly for viewing rental movies. Only 3 percent of viewing time is spent watching taped programs (according to A.C. Nielsen), probably because of the complexity of programming a VCR.

Simplification, however, is inevitable, as new products and developments make VCRs more user-friendly. Nielsen studies estimate that viewers currently ignore 40 percent of the commercials they tape, either by blindly speeding through commercial breaks or by not watching taped programs—and that number could rise. Viewer antipathy toward commercials continues to grow: Two-thirds of viewers polled last year by Video Storyboard Tests reported that they preferred television with no commercials at all (up from 53 percent in 1985).

Advertisers are already developing counterattacks, as agencies design spots to suit a four-second fast-forward glimpse rather than a 30-second long look. Changes include more obvious logo placement and "supers"—words flashed on the screen that are visible throughout the quick zip.

—*Wall Street Journal*

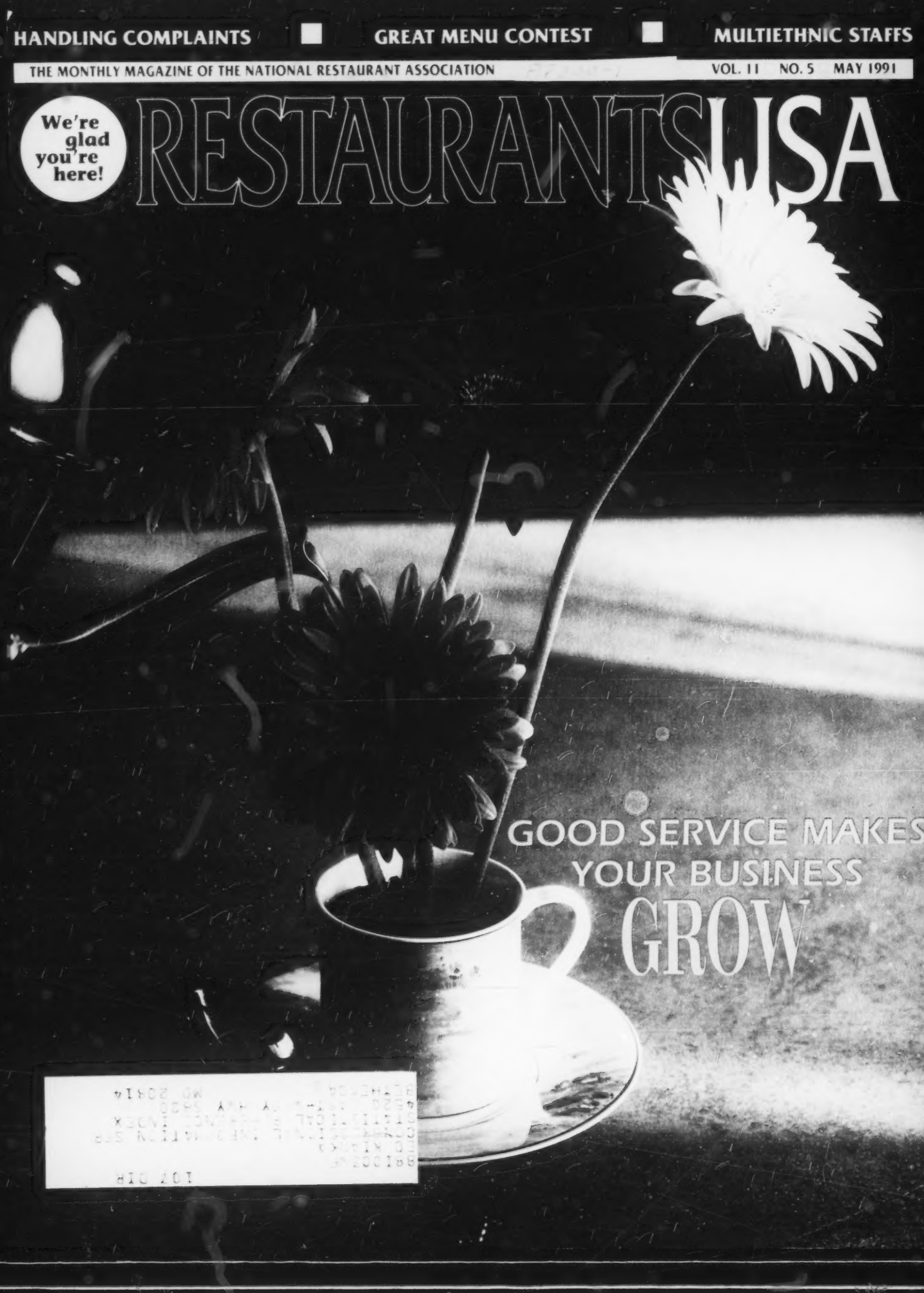

In good times and bad,
going to the Show can
boost your business with
new ideas, new products
and new contacts
The National Restaurant
Association Show
May 18 - 22 in Chicago.
For information, call
(312) 853-2525

HANDLING COMPLAINTS ■ GREAT MENU CONTEST ■ MULTIETHNIC STAFFS

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION VOL. 11 NO. 5 MAY 1991

We're glad you're here!

RESTAURANTS USA



GOOD SERVICE MAKES YOUR BUSINESS GROW

THIS BUTTON COULD BE WORTH MILLIONS TO YOU.

We're glad you're here!™

This and the other "We're glad you're here!" campaign materials will help raise hospitality standards in your establishment–and bring guests back. To participate in this industry-wide promotion, call the National Restaurant Association for a brochure and order form at (800) 424-5156.

EXECUTIVE STUDY GROUP SERIES

MAECO
5/15–17 Chicago, IL

Marketing Executives
5/15–18 Chicago, IL

For more information on specific study groups, contact Philip Kralovec at (312) 853-2525.

Foodservice Purchasing Managers
5/16–17 Chicago, IL

The Executive Study Groups present semi-annual professional development programs for executives who would like to meet with their industry peers to share ideas and concerns. Executives in each of the aforementioned disciplines from member foodservice companies are welcome and encouraged to participate.

International Development Executives
6/12–14 San Francisco, CA

Note: *A new study group focusing on international development is currently forming. Any persons interested in participating in this group are encouraged to contact Philip Kralovec.*

COURSES AND BOOKS AVAILABLE

Certification Courses
Applied Foodservice Sanitation (AFS)
Applied Foodservice Purchasing
Controlling Costs in Foodservice
Effective Foodservice Marketing
Foodservice: A Managerial Approach
NEW! Foodservice Management Accounting
Foodservice Supervision: Achieving Success through People
Introduction to the Foodservice Industry/ Introduction to Foodservice Management
Legal Aspects of Foodservice Management
Management by Menu
NEW! Managing Foodservice Facilities and Equipment
Managing Quantity Food Operations
NEW! Nutrition for the Foodservice Manager
NEW! Principles of Professional Cooking

Self-Development Courses
Protecting Restaurant Profits: Managing Security
Effective Communication
Managing People
Restaurant Operations and Control
Restaurant Purchasing
Bar and Beverage Management
Helping People Grow
Service: Managing the Guest Experience

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RESTAURANTS USA

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Executive Editor Jeffrey R. Prince
Editor Paul Moomaw
Managing Editor Melanie A. Crosby
Staff Contributors
Jennifer Batty
Elizabeth Gordon
Robert E. Harrington
Larry Himelfarb
Philip Kralovec
Andrew McLauchlin
Nancy Michalski
Susan Mills
Anne Papa Curtis
B. Hudson Riehle
Denise Roach
Linda Way
Diane Welland
Art Direction
Magazine: Tom Bellucci
Covers: Richard Earle, Liz Dalgetty
Administrative Assistant Susan Kessler
Editorial Secretary Ronda Bowers
Word Processing Operator Agnes Harkins
Intern Kathy Palumbo

Editorial office and association headquarters 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW Washington DC 20036-3097 (202) 331-5900
Chicago office 150 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2000 Chicago, IL 60601 (312) 853-2525

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Michael E. Hurst, owner
15th Street Fisheries, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

"Show of Shows" held this month

The foodservice industry's best and brightest will gather in Chicago May 18–22 for the 72nd National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show. The Show will be held at McCormick Place and will offer more than 100,000 attendees a chance to share ideas and see the latest in foodservice products, services and equipment.

One of the highlights of the Show will be the American Culinary Classic, a cooking competition among teams from 16 nations and four continents. Representing the United States will be the 1992 Culinary Team USA, winners of the Culinary Cup in Luxembourg last year. The Classic takes place only once every four years, and we are lucky to be able to witness the competition at the Show. Four teams compete each day in glass-enclosed kitchens that give attendees a close look at world-class chefs in action.

We'll all enjoy this opportunity to get together with fellow professionals in Chicago and to learn about food trends, equipment innovations and business strategies. If you're not attending the Show this year, start thinking about setting aside time next May for the foodservice industry's most important event.

Senate Luncheon held

The association's First Annual Senate Luncheon was held on April 16 on Capitol Hill in Washington DC. Nineteen senators attended the luncheon and spoke informally with association board members, state restaurant association executives and major contributors to the association's Congressional Leadership Forum. The luncheon was a fine opportunity for restaurant industry leaders to meet with senators to discuss issues affecting foodservice.

The luncheon was highlighted by desserts prepared by members of the 1992 Culinary Team USA. Meetings like this are c[illegible] o our ongoing efforts to make our side of legisla[illegible]ues known on Capitol Hill.

Projects with industry

The Nationa[illegible]estaurant Association has long championed the hiring of nontraditional workers, and we have a program that can help employers do so. The association's Projects With Industry (PWI) program, under the direction of A. Philip Nelan, acts as a liaison between the restaurant industry and qualified people with disabilities who would like to be employed.

This program works on two levels. Interested foodservice operations are contacted about vocational rehabilitation agencies that can match the employ[illegible] with trained individuals. Rehabilitation agencies, in tu[illegible], are contacted about operators who are interested in employing people with disabilities.

If you are interested in starting a hiring program for those with disabilities and would like more information, contact A. Philip Nelan at (202) 331-5988. Be sure to see the related article on page 18 of this magazine.

Alcohol education program available

The association's Educational Foundation is preparing to launch the "Servsafe Responsible Alcohol Service Program." The program will be introduced as a seminar

in Chicago just before the Show. The Servsafe program puts a strong emphasis on training managers to design and enforce an alcohol policy for their operations. The program also shows managers how to train their servers to recognize inebriation and intervene effectively.

The program will test managers using a certification examination. Managers will be supplied with videos, worker's manuals and tests for use with servers in the individual units. Permanent records of both managers and servers who are certified will be maintained at the Foundation. The program is a new and desirable alternative for alcohol-awareness training.

Congressional Directory holds valuable information

The new Congressional Directory is now available. The directory contains vital statistics on each member of Congress, gives phone and fax numbers and lists key staff members. The directory also includes committee assignments and maps of Congressional districts. The cost of the directory is $7.50, and it may be ordered from the association's government affairs department. Contact Gay Westbrook at (202) 331-5915.

"We're glad you're here!" promotional items

In these times of stiff competition and economic uncertainty, it is more important than ever to let customers know how much we value their business. The "We're glad you're here!" promotional items offered by the association help operators get this important message across to patrons. There are 19 products available with this slogan, including pins, posters, table tents, lollipops, stickers and floormats.

To help your staff live up to the promise of this slogan, the association has produced *The Courtesy Checklist.* This 16-page pamphlet covers critical moments of interaction between staff and guests in both tableservice and counterservice establishments. It suggests what actions and statements create an atmosphere of warm hospitality. To obtain order forms for "We're glad you're here!" materials or to order *The Courtesy Checklist,* call the National Restaurant Association at (800) 424-5156.

In April, 71 new members joined the association. We welcome each of you, and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Hurst

Michael E. Hurst
President and Chairman of the Board

RESTAURANTS USA

COVER STORY: GOOD SERVICE MAKES YOUR BUSINESS GROW

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A loyal customer is worth a lot more than a coupon-carrying newcomer is. These restaurateurs are targeting promotions at the regulars.

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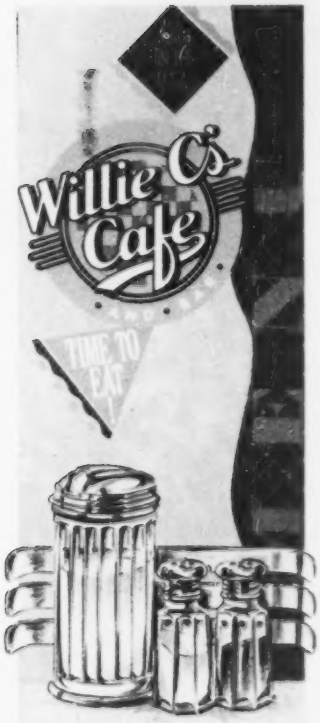
Business experts discuss how to make the most of customer complaints.



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Cover photo by Gary Landsman

Educational Foundation announces scholarships

A number of $750 scholarships will be made available to qualified students and managers enrolled in the Management Development Diploma Program offered by the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association.

The new scholarships are available to part-time and full-time hospitality program students enrolled in the Diploma Program, as well as to individuals taking the program through home study. Full-time students are eligible for scholarships when they first enroll in the Diploma Program. Part-time students and home-study students may apply for scholarships after completing four of the required eight courses.

"The benefits of the scholarship are twofold," says Foundation President Daniel Gescheidle. "Not only do individuals receive the funds to help pursue their education, but by completing the Diploma Program, they earn an industry-recognized diploma from the National Restaurant Association."

Gescheidle adds that the program's home-study option enables managers to further their education in foodservice management without returning to school full-time.

Scholarship awards will be distributed three times throughout the year, and schools offering the Diploma Program are eligible to receive up to five scholarships each calendar year.

Applications for the scholarships are now available. Completed applications for the first Diploma Scholarships must be postmarked no later than June 1, 1991, to receive consideration. Applicants will be judged on industry-related work experience, grade-point average, goals and commitment of the applicant, and perceptions of the industry's future. The first Diploma Program scholarships will be awarded in August.

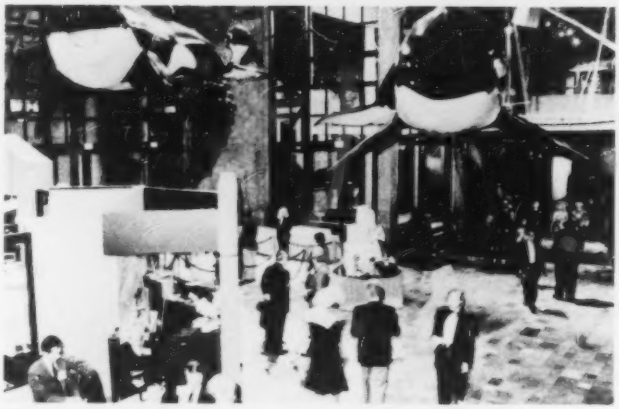
For an application or for more information, contact the Scholarship Services Department, Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association, 250 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60606. Or call (312) 715-1010.

Vintage '91 pours wine and scholarships

More than 430 restaurateurs, hoteliers and wine industry professionals gathered at the Monterey Wine Festival Vintage '91, held March 17–19 in Monterey, California.

Attendees tasted wines poured by more than 225 California wineries, and bidders at festival auctions raised more than $32,000 for educational scholarships.

The sixth annual event was kicked off this year with an opening-night reception at the Monterey Bay Aquarium.



The Monterey Wine Festival's opening-night reception was held at the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

Gregg Wathe

Wine festival attendees learn about the finer points of wine at a festival seminar.

High bidders Bert Cutino (far left) and Ted Balestreri (far right) flank the festival monk and their prize bottle of wine.

The high bidders during the festival's live auction were Ted J. Balestreri and Bert Cutino, co-owners of Monterey's Sardine Factory restaurant. Their prize purchase was an 18-liter 1987 Estate Crane Creek Cabernet Sauvignon from Lambert Bridge Winery.

Car rental discount increased

National Car Rental has increased the discount offered to association members. The discount on daily and weekly business rates has been upped from 20 percent to 25 percent.

In addition, association members are entitled to a 5 percent discount on leisure rates. To make a reservation, members can call National Car Rental at (800) CAR-RENT and mention their National Restaurant Association discount ID number. Members receive the special rates by showing their membership cards or discount ID cards at the time of rental.

Ramada Renaissance wins environmental award

The Ramada Renaissance Hotel in Atlanta has been presented with the Environmental Quality Achievement Award for 1991 by the American Hotel & Motel Association (AH&MA).

The winning hotel property was chosen from entries submitted by hotels and motels that have worked to improve environmental quality in areas of property/community beautification, natural resources and conservation. The Ramada Renaissance won the award for improving the area surrounding the hotel and initiating a recycling program.

The hotel's program began with the "Adopt-A-Street" program, in which employees of the hotel gather weekly to pick up trash along a one-mile stretch of highway near the hotel. To reduce landscape waste at the hotel, flower beds of annuals were replaced with flowers that grow back each year. Recycling is also an integral part of the hotel's ongoing operations. White paper, glass bottles, aluminum cans, cooking grease and oil are all recycled.

The Environmental Quality Achievement Award of the AH&MA is now in its tenth year.

Walt Disney World recognized for accessibility

The presidential board charged with implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act has recognized Walt Disney World Co. for its initiatives to increase accessibility for people with disabilities.

The U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board presented the company with its second annual Chairman's Award, given to "recognize the private-sector initiatives which increase accessibility to all Americans," said board chairman William H. McCabe.

"Throughout the design and construction of the theme parks, transportation system, hotels and other amenities, Disney has demonstrated its commitment and sensitivity to accessible design," said McCabe.

The award was presented during a recent public forum in central Florida on new laws regarding access for people of varying abilities. After the presentation, board members heard from Dick Wiedenbeck, vice president, Walt Disney World Design & Engineering, about future projects designed to further increase accessibility. With help and input from board member Robert Cothren, who is blind, Wiedenbeck demonstrated a prototype Braille map that is being developed for use as a guide to the Disney theme parks.

Address your comments about ***Restaurants USA*** and current foodservice issues to: ***Restaurants USA*** Feedback, National Restaurant Association, 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. Submissions for publication may be edited for length.

EEOC chairman warns against sex discrimination

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has asked the National Restaurant Association to urge restaurants—especially fine-dining restaurants—not to discriminate on the basis of gender, with regard to employment practices. The commission is reacting to increased complaints of sex discrimination in fine-dining restaurants.

"Based on our observations and anecdotal evidence, we believe that sex discrimination in fine-dining restaurants is a very widespread practice," said EEOC Chairman Evan Kemp in a recent interview with ***Restaurants USA.*** "We want to send a message out to these restaurants that they can't discriminate."

EEOC Chairman Evan Kemp

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on gender—against either men or women—in all terms and conditions of employment, including recruitment, hiring, firing, assignment, promotion, pay and benefits.

The law applies to employers of 15 or more full-time or part-time employees. EEOC, the federal agency that enforces the law, defines an employee as anyone who is on the payroll for at least 20 weeks of the year.

Alleged bias against female servers

Although EEOC cannot pinpoint any statistical increase in sex-discrimination charges against fine-dining restaurants, Kemp said his agency has recently received several nearly identical complaints from women who had unsuccessfully applied for higher-paying tipped positions in upscale restaurants or who were discouraged from applying because the restaurants had a reputation for hiring only men.

Restaurants, like other employers, must treat all qualified applicants fairly and take the most qualified.

The complaints allege that the accused restaurateurs hired waitstaff on the premise that tuxedo-clad

men are better than women at producing the proper atmosphere in a fine-dining establishment.

Kemp recalled his own recent dining experience in a restaurant that had a glaring lack of female servers. When asked about the absence, Kemp's waiter responded that "you just don't have women as waiters in nice restaurants." Kemp said it is exactly this attitude that EEOC is eager to stop.

The commission hopes to solve the discrimination problem by educating employers about the law.

Kemp stressed that EEOC would prefer not to initiate a major enforcement effort. Instead, the EEOC hopes to solve the problem by educating foodservice employers about the law. "We hope that this is just something that the industry hasn't been paying attention to and that can be turned around once restaurants are made aware of the law," explained Kemp.

EEOC is currently pressing at least 22 cases of sex discrimination against fine-dining establishments. The cases cite operators for allegedly aiming advertising and recruitment at men only and then refusing to hire females or assign them to foodserver positions.

Kemp emphasized, however, that EEOC has not targeted restaurateurs for increased investigation. "We're not going to go out looking for restaurants that don't have women, but we will accept and have been accepting charges of discrimination," he said.

Review of hiring practices recommended

"If a restaurant manager looks around and all he has are men waiting on tables, then it ought to occur to him that maybe something is going on in his hiring practices that needs more attention," said Kemp. The chairman recommended that restaurateurs review employment policies with managers and other key personnel to ensure that women are offered equal opportunity to higher-paying tipped employment.

"Restaurants, like other employers, must treat all qualified applicants fairly and take the most qualified. Don't make hiring decisions based on a preconceived notion that a woman cannot be as good a waiter as a man. Look at the individual," said Kemp.

—Andrew McLauchlin

Restaurateurs host Senate Luncheon

The association's First Annual Senate Luncheon was held on April 16 on Capitol Hill, hosted by Sen. Bob Kerrey (D–NE) and the National Restaurant Association.

The event gave restaurateurs and senators a chance to meet and share ideas in a social setting complete with outstanding food. Among the 19 senators who attended were Finance Committee Chairman Lloyd Bentsen (D–TX), Minority Leader Robert Dole (R–KS) and Majority Whip Wendell Ford (D–KY).

(continued)

DC ROUNDUP

☐ *FICA repeal introduced.* In response to requests from the National Restaurant Association and many individual restaurant operators, Rep. Byron Dorgan (D–ND) and Sen. John Breaux (D–LA) introduced legislation in late March to repeal a 1987 law that requires employers to pay Social Security (FICA) payroll taxes on all tips employees report.

The bills (H.R. 1472 and S. 765) would reinstate pre-1988 law by requiring employers to pay FICA taxes only on tip income up to the applicable federal or state minimum wage.

As of April 11, H.R. 1472 had attracted 20 cosponsors, and S. 765 had 15. Much more support is needed to pressure House and Senate leaders to consider repealing the FICA tax on tips. Call your lawmakers today at the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121. Ask them to cosponsor H.R. 1472 (in the House) and S. 765 (in the Senate).

☐ *Association pushes EITC expansion.* The National Restaurant Association took the offensive last month in pushing to expand the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), a tax break for low-income workers with children.

With the federal minimum wage having increased 12 percent on April 1 and Senate Labor Committee Chairman Ted Kennedy (D–MA) leading calls for further wage hikes, the association delivered a background paper on the EITC to every member of Congress. The paper urges lawmakers to refine and expand the EITC rather than try to use the minimum wage to raise the earnings of low-income households.

The association pointed out that the EITC targets the "working poor" more efficiently than the minimum wage does. An expanded EITC would do more to bring these families out of poverty, while still providing incentives and opportunities for work.

☐ *Pizza Hut calls for permanent TJTC.* Joseph Froehle, a market manager for Pizza Hut, Inc., in Nashville, Tennessee, traveled to Washington DC on April 10 to ask House tax writers to extend the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC) permanently.

TJTC, a tax break available since 1978 for employers who hire disadvantaged or disabled workers from nine "target" groups, is due to expire at the end of this year. Bills have been introduced in the House (H.R. 22) and Senate (S. 581) to make TJTC permanent.

Froehle told the House Ways and Means Committee that more employers, especially small restaurants, would take advantage of the program if Congress made TJTC permanent.

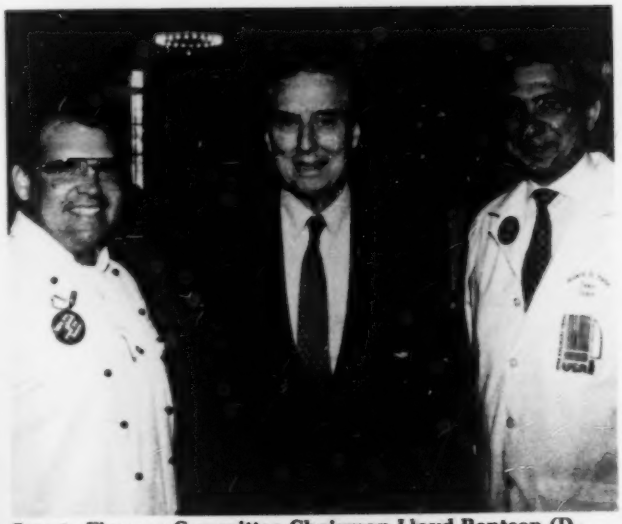
In addition to the 19 senators, attendees included National Restaurant Association board members, state restaurant association executives and several major contributors to the Congressional Leadership Forum (CLF), which sponsored the event.

Separate food stations, representing the cuisines of different regions of the country, were created by the Senate Dining Services. Desserts were prepared by members of the 1992 Culinary Team USA, winners of the Culinary World Cup in Luxembourg in November 1990.

After the luncheon, Culinary Team manager Keith Keogh and the team made a special presentation for the Ladies of the Senate, a group composed of wives of senators. A 10-minute film on the selection of the Culinary Team USA was shown. Team members Martha Crawford and Louis Borochaner explained how they created their desserts, and Keogh and Roland Henin discussed food trends and nutrition.

—*Jennifer Batty*

Senator Bob Kerrey (D–NE), left, restaurateur and host of the Senate Luncheon, talks with association board member Herman Cain, right, president and CEO of Godfather's Pizza, Inc., and chairman of the association's Government Relations Committee.



Photos by Sonny Odom

Senate Finance Committee Chairman Lloyd Bentsen (D–TX), center, joins 1992 Culinary Team USA manager Keith Keogh, left, and team coach Roland Henin, right, at the Senate Luncheon.

Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole (R–KS), left, waits to try a bowl of New England clam chowder, a regional dish prepared by the Senate Dining Services.

1992 Culinary Team USA member Darryl Evans, right, offers Senator Charles Robb (D–VA), left, one of the team's tempting pastries.

Is polystyrene worth a second look?

The debate about the health and environmental effects of the use and reuse of polystyrene foam products has been raging for several years, and still no solid conclusions have been reached. Until research uncovers *the* solution to our packaging questions, restaurateurs will continue to be met at every turn with conflicting data and unanswered questions.

Proponents of either paper products or polystyrene can find experts—and even "scientific" evidence—to back up their claims. Adding to the restaurateur's dilemma is the fact that customers' perceptions are as important as reality when it comes to choosing packaging.

So, what is the correct environmental choice? The question is a difficult one for foodservice operators. It is often reported that polystyrene packaging is clogging landfills, but this claim is highly exaggerated. It is true that polystyrene is bulkier than other packaging and is nonbiodegradable, but polystyrene is not the source of the majority of our trash. According to the Polystyrene Packaging Council in Washington DC, foam foodservice products make up less than 1 percent of total landfill volume. In addition, polystyrene foam is 90 percent air and compresses easily in a compactor or under the weight of a landfill.

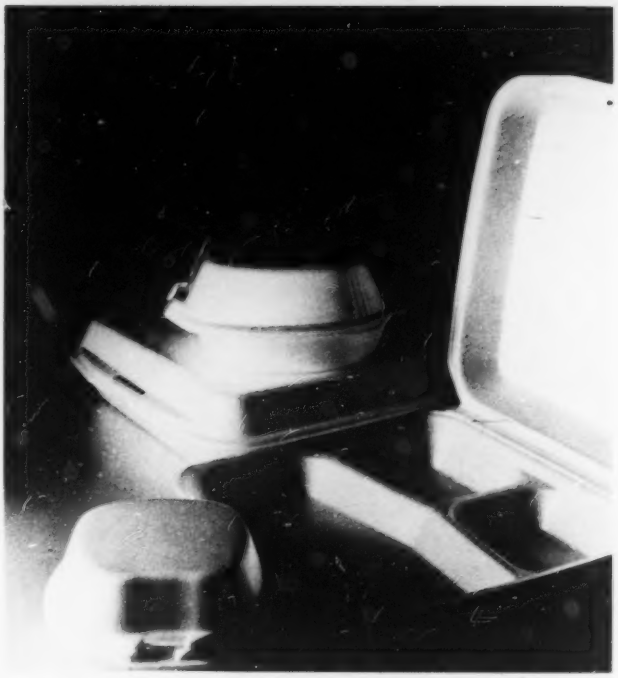
Polystyrene is also often accused of polluting the air and destroying the ozone layer. Although polystyrene production does release some chemicals into the air, proponents of polystyrene use argue that such emissions are no more dangerous than gases and pollutants released during the manufacture (and later degradation) of other packaging options. Proponents also claim that polystyrene production puts less of a drain on energy and natural resources than producing other packaging does.

Polystyrene recycling

Polystyrene can be recycled. Although polystyrene recycling programs have been slower to develop than have those for some other materials, they are beginning to take root nationwide. Two factors working against polystyrene recycling are collection (a problem with all recyclable materials) and a resale market for the recycled product. Strides have been made regarding the first factor. According to the Polystyrene Packaging Council, 28 states now support some type of polystyrene recycling in restaurants, schools and neighborhoods.

The second problem is fading as well. Foam products can be recycled into a variety of products, ranging from cafeteria trays to coat hangers. Even buildings can be constructed from recycled polystyrene. The first "recycled" McDonald's restaurant opened in 1990 in Tempe, Arizona. The restaurant's building itself contains large amounts of recycled polystyrene.

Until recently, polystyrene foam could not be recycled and used again for one of its most popular uses—foodservice packaging. Under current FDA regulations, it is deemed unsanitary to have recycled polystyrene come in contact with food items. But a new packaging product called RECOUP may change the resale picture.



The new foam material, developed by Lin Pac Plastics, headquartered in the United Kingdom, is made of 50 percent recycled post-consumer foam and 50 percent "virgin" polystyrene. The recycled layer is embedded between two newly made polystyrene layers. Hence, no recycled product touches the food, meeting all current regulations.

In late March, Hardee's Food Systems, Inc., based in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, announced that it would become the first restaurant company to use RECOUP. The fast food chain plans to initiate use of the packaging for several hamburger items in more than 300 restaurants in the Baltimore-Washington area, and Hardee's hopes to expand usage to other products and areas by year's end.

Hardee's stands behind its use of polystyrene, praising its recyclability, as well as its insulating and strength characteristics. "It is also the only disposable food packaging currently available that is, in fact, being recycled," says John Merritt, senior vice president, public relations, for Hardee's. The company views the development and widespread use of RECOUP as a chance to boost growing recycling efforts as it "opens the door to create a market for recycled materials across America," says Merritt. Hardee's is launching a polystyrene recycling program as it ushers in its new packaging.

Many more questions

This recycled polystyrene packaging certainly is not an answer to all the questions about foodservice packaging. It may only raise new questions in the "paper vs. polystyrene" debate. Restaurateurs and consumers will have to continue to weigh the costs and benefits of the use of all types of packaging.

For more information on polystyrene and polystyrene recycling, contact the Polystyrene Packaging Council in Washington DC at (202) 822-6424.

—Melanie A. Crosby

SERVICE IN THE 1990s

Timing, teamwork and training are the elements of good service.

THE WAY TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS

by Gary M. Stern

Experts agree: Service is becoming the most important part of a restaurant's mix.

"Service is playing a bigger role in the '90s because competition for the discretionary dollar has become so fierce," says Bonnie Schwartz, an American Express marketing director formerly in charge of restaurant marketing. Service, she stresses, is one way a restaurant can differentiate itself from the competition. The importance of service cuts across every segment of the restaurant market: fast food, family-style restaurants and upscale eateries.

Susy Davidson, food editor of *Food & Wine* magazine, says that more than ever before, patrons are dining where they feel comfortable. "Customers want to feel welcome," she says. "Too many restaurants in the past were more interested in intimidating their patrons than welcoming them. Whether diners are eating in fast food restaurants or Lutece, they want to be told and shown, 'We're happy to have you here, and we'd love to have you back.' "

"People will forgive a lot if service is helpful and friendly," says New York City food and restaurant consultant Clark Wolf, who has consulted for the Russian Tea Room and Loews Hotels. "We [customers] don't want to be told what's right or wrong. The haughty tuxedoed waiter is out."

Consultant Walter Staib, based in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, points out that service can attract repeat clients as much as food can. "How many people are true connoisseurs?" he asks rhetorically. Most of all, they expect attentive and friendly service. "If the service is courteous, you can get return customers," he declares.

Unfortunately, restaurants don't always measure up to customer expectations for service. Tim Zagat, publisher of the *Zagat Survey* restaurant guides, points out that his research invariably shows that patrons rate the service they receive at a restaurant far lower than its food and decor.

Key factor #1: timing

Timing is a major factor in satisfying a diner's expectations. Tim Zagat defines this timing as being able to handle diners promptly and smoothly—and being alert to customer needs so that no one sits for 10 minutes without getting the server's attention. The menu, the equipment, the server's sensitivity to the diner, and the relationship between the front and back of the house all determine a meal's timeliness.

Timeliness affects the entire meal from beginning to end. How long does it take the server to put the menu down? How long does it take the check to arrive? A server should understand how long a dish takes to prepare and should inform the patron that the swordfish, for example, may take 20 minutes extra to prepare.

A staff's attention to detail serves as another factor in customer satisfaction. If the waitstaff is trained efficiently, servers will master table maintenance, including knowing when to refill the water glass, when to provide the dessert menu and when to refill coffee. Knowing when to present the check is itself an art that servers have to master, suggests Clark Wolf.

Steve Shapiro, a San Diego training consultant who runs special seminars in training professional servers, notes that one major complaint is that servers are indifferent. Shapiro says the secret of being a successful server is caring. The server who cares, he says, "takes the focus off the tip and puts it on the customer."

Shapiro trains servers to read a table by asking, "Why are these patrons dining out?" Diners celebrating a birthday will expect one kind of service, and a business or solo diner will expect another. After determining the motivation of a table's diners, the waitstaff can focus on "giving individ-

ualized, personalized attention and customized service based upon the guests' needs."

Ironically, says Shapiro, one of the least likely reasons for dining out is eating. If customers are just hungry, says Shapiro, they can easily go to a grocery store.

Timothy Firnstahl of the Seattle-based restaurant consulting firm Ultimate Strategy Services notes that consumer research reveals that a major factor in most patrons' lives is a lack of free time. When dining out, these customers want service to be sensitive to their time needs. Most diners

eating at a moderately priced restaurant want to be in and out in 45 minutes, he says. "Protracted dining experiences are a thing of the past," he says. Of course, in upscale restaurants, diners spending $100 on a meal may choose to linger a bit longer.

Consultant Firnstahl adds that even patrons dining at a less-than-upscale restaurant expect high-quality service. "Do people expect less service because they don't earn a lot of money?" asks Firnstahl. "Does somebody who spends less money have a less busy life?"

The Manhattan restaurant Alo Alo was recently voted in an American Express survey as offering the best service in New York. David Pearlberg, general manager of the restaurant, says his staff is constantly working on timing. Timing results from teamwork. "Busboys have to work with the waitstaff, and the waitstaff has to work with the kitchen," says Pearlberg.

Factor #2: teamwork

When David Bouley, owner of the restaurant Bouley in New York City, read a survey which showed that his restaurant scored much higher on food and decor than service, he decided to do something about it. He had a meeting with everyone on his staff, from the sommelier to the dishwasher, to discuss how to improve service. The staff decided to write its own customized employee manual, detailing what each person's responsibility was.

"Many times," says Bouley, "there were problems that a dishwasher would create that reflected on the performance of the waiter." With the manual reinforcing how each employee is responsible to another, teamwork was heightened at Bouley. To enhance service even more, Bouley is using a detailed computer system that documents the dining preferences of regular customers: where they like to sit, what wines they prefer and which dishes they like.

Before encountering the server, the customer meets an important person on a restaurant's staff: the host or hostess. David Pearlberg describes the hostess as the person "who starts the restaurant's relationship with the patron." Although some restaurants are interested in hiring a hostess who looks like a *Vogue* model, Pearlberg chooses a hostess who can build instant rapport with the restaurant's clientele. He instructs hostesses to come across as pleasant and easygoing without being pretentious, setting the tone for his casual restaurant. The host or hostess should inform patrons how long the wait is, direct them to the bar and show courtesy in welcoming customers.

Alo Alo waitress Nonnie Weaver was voted the best waitress on the East Coast in an American Express poll. She points out that Alo Alo pools its tips so that all servers must depend on each other to keep satisfied. "This way everyone makes consistent amounts and is responsible for helping each other," she says.

Weaver goes on to say that good service revolves around "having a sense of what the customer wants from you." While she is greeting the patrons, she looks for signals as to

One major complaint from customers is that servers are indifferent. The secret of being a successful server is caring.

whether a diner wants to be left alone or whether the diner wants to converse with her. Some tourist customers clue her in on wanting to know facts about New York, and others express an interest in knowing details about the pasta dishes. Some patrons, including those who are transacting business, prefer that the waitress not intrude on the table's conversation. Couples on a romantic date, too, may wish to be left alone.

Factor #3: training

In one recent nationwide poll, Barrett's on Boston Harbour was voted the restaurant with the best service in the country. According to general manager and operating partner Kevin Vitale, a restaurant must have a dedicated and organized approach to service. Hiring people with the right attitude is an important ingredient in providing good service, he says. Vitale hires only people who enjoy serving and who "don't have anything against life." He also looks for servers who take pride in themselves and are friendly and upbeat.

After hiring, Barrett's provides a week of training. During the training, the chef reviews dishes with the new servers, discussing each dish's ingredients. Servers are later tested on the information, and those who score poorly are given one more opportu-

Service is a sincere desire to take care of guests—not the policy and rules posted on the wall.

nity to improve. If a server's score is still low the second time, he or she is dismissed. "We want people who are serious about the job," says Vitale.

After the initial week of training, the novice server spends a week with an experienced waitperson who shows the new server the ropes. "If you don't train them properly," says Vitale, "you'll be paying for it later on, because customers won't come back."

Part of eliciting good service from the waitstaff involves recognizing employees. The Frankenmuth Bavarian Inn in Frankenmuth, Michigan, has created a special category for waiters and waitresses who excel—they are known as "supervisors." These expert servers are given special authority to oversee fellow employees.

Bill Zehnder, one of the restaurant's owners, says monthly meetings are held during which service standards and hospitality are discussed. Employees who make a special effort to improve service are given gift certificates to use in the restaurant's retail shop. The fact that all employees share in profits and receive bonuses heightens their desire to offer high-quality service.

Tim Zagat notes that service staff members in the United States have not received the same respect as chefs. Over the last 20 years, chefs have gained celebrity status through publicity and accreditation through graduate programs. When schools treat service with the same respect as they do cooking, service will improve, suggests Zagat.

The New England Culinary Institute, located in Montpelier, Vermont, is inaugurating its hotel and restaurant management program with an emphasis on restaurant service, reports John Dranow, the school's co-founder. Dranow says the course will teach future restaurant managers the basics of serving. "The level of service has not kept pace with the level of cuisine in this country," says Dranow. He defines the basics of serving as knowing how to carry a tray, take an order, communicate with a customer and talk with one's staff.

Buying some feedback

To obtain feedback on his staff's service, general manager Carl Schuster of Shula's Steak House in Miami Lakes, Florida, uses a shopping service that pays a once-a-month unannounced, anonymous visit to Shula's and evaluates service. Schuster says the hired shopper's comments "keep us on track." Rather than using these evaluations punitively, Schuster looks for positive information from the service. In addition, Schuster strives to educate his staff by holding monthly meetings on new wines and new dishes—and to review monthly goals.

K.C. Castro, a waitress at Shula's for 11 years, knows the importance of repeat business to the success of a restaurant. When customers sit down at one of her tables at Shula's, Castro immediately greets the patrons and "treats them as if they were guests in my house. You start with a smile," she says. After giving patrons a few minutes to read the menu and order, Castro makes sure that the salad arrives quickly and that the main dish arrives soon after the salad is consumed. Patrons who wish to linger are free to do so.

Doug Brooks is the senior vice president of operations for the central region for Chili's, Inc., a chain of 230 moderately priced family restaurants. Brooks is responsible for overseeing service, and he says that sound service starts with a management team that encourages good service as part of the restaurant's culture. "We feel that service is a state of mind. It's a sincere desire to take care of guests—not the policy and rules posted on the wall," says Brooks.

In an ongoing training program specializing in role-playing, servers are encouraged to "exceed customer expectations." Brooks explains that each guest has different expectations, and waiters are trained to provide speedy service for those who want it and service that is relaxed for those who prefer a slower pace.

Consistent service

Although fine-quality service is often associated with independent operations as opposed to chains, independent restaurateurs can learn something about service from the fast food industry, suggests Carlos Garcia of Stephens-Bangs Associates, a consulting firm based in Southfield, Michigan. "You expect to find consistency" in quickservice restaurants, says Garcia, and consistency is a key feature of a high-quality operation at any level.

In fact, it is that consistency of service that will make a patron choose to dine at an operation consistently. As Kevin Vitale puts it, "Service has become as important as the food itself." ❑

Gary Stern is a writer in New York City.

Expert thoughts on service

Good service incorporates many elements, and everyone has his or her own ideas about what it takes to deliver high-quality service. Here are some ideas from experts:

☐ *Carl Schuster, general manager of Shula's Steak House:* "The key to good service is hiring people who want to serve people and who aren't in it just for the money."

☐ *Steve Shapiro, training consultant:* "The professional server will treat all guests as if they were his only guests. He'll have a sharp appearance, confident approach, a positive attitude and thorough product knowledge."

☐ *Nonnie Weaver, waitress at Alo Alo:* "If the customer has a complaint about the food and wants to return it, the manager should step in immediately, ask how he can help and say, 'Can I get you something else?' Never argue with a customer."

☐ *Bill Zehnder, co-owner of Frankenmuth Bavarian Inn:* "The more attentive an owner is to his employees, the longer they will remain with the restaurant. Service turnover leads to problems. We strive for retention with staff scholarship programs, bonuses and profit-sharing."

☐ *David Pearlberg, general manager at Alo Alo:* "I want the staff to have fun. I promote their having a good time and interacting with each other. The customer picks up that high energy level."

☐ *K.C. Castro, waitress at Shula's Steak House:* "If you come in once, I may not remember you. But by your second or certainly by the third visit, I'll remember. Everyone likes to be recognized."

HOW TO KEEP THEM COMING BACK

Regular customers deserve special treatment, and these restaurants have devised promotions aimed straight at loyal patrons.

by Julie Fintel

"Thank you for being a steady customer. We appreciate your business. Please come back again."

Restaurateurs are finding many different ways to say these things to customers who eat often at their restaurants. Just as important as attracting new customers is turning that new customer into an old friend. The traveling person on an expense account may be a big spender when dining out, but it is the regular customer who is the backbone of a restaurant's business.

Sometimes, showing your regular customers that you care can be more effective than telling them. The Rusty Pelican chain, based in San Juan Capistrano, California, rewards those who dine regularly at their restaurants with priority reservations.

Demand for a table at the Rusty Pelican can be great, especially on weekends and especially at oceanside locations. Regular customers, who have been singled out by managers, are given a plastic card with unlisted phone numbers for the chain's restaurants. When customers use the unlisted number, a special phone in the restaurant rings, and the reservation-taker knows to give priority to the caller. "Of course we ask that they don't wait until the last minute, especially on Fridays and Saturdays. Other regular customers may be ahead of them," says Susan Schneider, the chain's former marketing manager. "But we do what we can. We give them the next available table, and we do set aside a certain number of tables for our priority customers. It's our way of saying 'thank you' to regular customers."

T.L.C.

In Virginia Beach, Gus' Mariner Restaurant created a T.L.C. (The Local Customer) program to reward local clientele. Like other restaurants in the resort town, Gus' Mariner formerly did not accept reservations. During tourist season, which begins each year in May, the wait for a table is often two hours. Locals who patronized the restaurant during the off-season didn't think it was fair that they had to wait along with the tourists during the summer, and food and beverage director Kyle Riley agreed.

Locals can now qualify as frequent diners by eating at the restaurant 10 times during the off-season (September through February). They then become card-bearing regulars, and that qualifies them to be able to reserve a table during the peak season. There are also added bonuses including a complimentary special each night (such as an appetizer or glass of wine) and three free cocktail parties a year.

"This is our fifth year for the program, and demand is unbelievable," says Riley. "And you wouldn't believe what people will do to get a card when May comes and they realize they haven't qualified. The program has meant an enormous boost to business."

The definition of locals may be stretched a bit at the Yellow Brick Toad, which is located in Lambertville, New Jersey, a rural area between Philadelphia and New York City. But the restaurant definitely depends on a clientele of regulars, even if many of the regulars must drive an hour from the big cities to get to the restaurant.

Owner David Duthie is always thinking of ways to get his customers to come back. One such inspiration is the Chef du Jour promotion. Duthie invites customers to apply for the opportunity to spend an afternoon and evening cooking a favorite recipe in the restaurant kitchen for the customers. Duthie originally planned for the promotion to last only during the slow winter months. The guest-chef program has increased business on those nights by 500 or 600 percent. "The key is to get guest chefs with lots of friends," says Duthie. "We want them to invite their family, their friends, the neighborhood and the people at work."

Make them part of the family

The secret to getting guests to return is to make them feel special. "Coddle them," says Joyce Goldstein, who owns Square One in San Francisco. Goldstein even telephones regular customers if her restaurant is serving their favorite meals.

Whereas Goldstein can keep all her customers' likes and dislikes in her head, other restaurateurs rely on written records. Danny Meyer, of Union Square Cafe in New York City, has a notebook where he writes down the preferences of his regular customers: whether a person wants to sit in the smoking or the nonsmoking section, which table he or she prefers, what wine or drink the person is most likely to order, and even the person's favorite waiter. Customers especially appreciate receiving favored treatment when they are bringing guests to dine at a restaurant.

In addition to making regular customers feel like part of the family, each year the Yellow Brick Toad singles out one person or a couple who dine regularly at the restaurant for special recognition. When a customer or couple is named Patron of the Year, their names are added to the Patron of the Year plaque. These customers are honored at the restaurant's annual birthday party. "Members of the Patron of the Year Society are given royal treatment every time they come in to our restaurant," says Duthie.

Newsletters that bring 'em back

A newsletter that is sent to regular customers can be an invaluable tool for letting patrons know more about the restaurant, the people who work there and the people who come there. As readers learn more about the restaurant, they begin to feel connected to part of a larger community—a community with a common interest in good food, good wine and your restaurant. Successful newsletters include stories about staff members as well as customers; people love to read about themselves.

Square One's Goldstein mails a newsletter to 7,000 regular customers. Written in a personal style, the letter lets regular customers find out first about special events at Square One.

Union Square Cafe's Meyer has formatted the restaurant's newsletter to look like a regular letter typed on a typewriter. "We haven't gone to desktop publishing because we think that would give it an unwanted 'corporate' feeling," says Meyer.

Jim Lark, co-owner of The Lark in Bloomfield, Michigan, uses the newsletter he sends to his regular customers to pass on travel tips about places he has been to, places where he has eaten and stayed, and wines that he has tasted. When a customer hasn't been in to The Lark for six months, he or she is sent a copy of the newsletter with a gold sticker attached. The sticker says, "We miss you."

"When the customer sees the sticker, that person knows right away that it's the last newsletter the customer will get," says The Lark's Pat Wilhite. "The sticker makes people call up and make reservations right away and say, 'Put me back on your list.' " Wilhite says the newsletter is a lot of work, but it's the only form of advertising the restaurant uses.

It's what every restaurateur dreams of: a steady stream of regular customers. But it takes good food, hard work and promotions aimed at frequent customers to keep bringing them back. ❑

Julie Fintel is a writer in Burke, Virginia.

It makes sense to keep customers

Every restaurateur loves new business. Some owners spend so much time trying to reach new customers that they ignore their current clientele. Here are some ideas for staying in touch with the regulars:

- ☐ Send a handwritten thank-you note to regular customers.
- ☐ As owner or manager, spend at least 30 minutes a day calling different clients just to thank them.
- ☐ Let your employees know who your "best" customers are.
- ☐ Build a file of personal information about customers (including family members' names, awards, honors and interests) and use it to personalize your contacts.
- ☐ Invite clients in to ask for honest responses on how you can improve your business and thereby help them.
- ☐ Volunteer to assist a customer with a civic project of special interest.
- ☐ Offer your facilities "after hours" to a civic organization.
- ☐ Invite special customers to functions such as Christmas parties and retirement celebrations.
- ☐ Make sure that nonhuman elements of your business, such as the telephone system, answering machine and computer, don't frustrate your customer.

—Shelburne Ferguson, Jr.

Shelburne Ferguson, Jr. is an attorney and management consultant in Kingsport, Tennessee.

by Joan E. Herlong

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A COMPLAINT

"There is no such thing as a complaint." This is the service gospel according to Dan Maher, a principal with The TQM (Total Quality Management) Group in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Professor James L. Heskett of Harvard's Graduate School of Business Administration. Maher and Heskett are contributors to a *Harvard Business Review* article entitled "Soothing the Savage Customer" (*Best of Business Quarterly*, Winter 1990/91).

Soothing the "savage" customer is the last thing any restaurateur wants to do. Instead it is better to deal with an "annoyed" or "confused" customer so well that the savagery never develops. Maher and Heskett agreed to share their ideas with ***Restaurants USA*** about anticipating and handling service slip-ups—and even turning complaints to your advantage.

You are quoted as saying, "There is no such thing as a complaint." Most restaurateurs would not agree. Could you explain what you mean?

James Heskett: Complaints are like golden nuggets that supply insight into your business. They are vastly underreported. For every complaint you hear, about five go unheard. A complainer is basically saying, "Give me a reason to come back." The lowest rate of repeat business is among people who never complain.

Dan Maher: In general, people are not forthcoming about raising a complaint. They don't want to be perceived as a pain. I've worked in a lot of different restaurant jobs, and I've learned a complaint is actually information on how to improve your business. In fact, if Mr. Customer leaves without voicing a problem he had with the service, I'm watching about $1,500 walk out the door.

Are you saying that a customer who does not complain costs a restaurateur money?

Maher: Look at it from a marketing perspective. How do you get someone to try your restaurant for the first time? You spend marketing dollars. Once he's in the door, you have to figure the lifetime value of that customer if he comes back, say, once a month.

Let's say he returns about once a month and spends $125 on dinner. Multiply that by 12, and he's worth about $1,500 a year to you. If he leaves without telling you a problem he had with the service—or without having his problem properly addressed—that $1,500 is walking out the door.

You have to think of addressing his complaint as part of your marketing budget—it's not giving away the store. You have to ask, "What does it take to address Mr. Customer's problem and keep that $1,500 from walking out forever?" It makes a lot more sense to spend 80 percent of your marketing budget on keeping the valuable customers you already have and the other 20 percent on bringing in new customers.

What's the smartest way to handle complaints?

Heskett: First of all, when in doubt you should trust your customer. Very few customers cheat, by the way. At least trust them to tell you what the problem is and whether your solution is satisfactory. They have gone to a lot of trouble to tell you in the first place. Trust your employee, as well, to have good judgement in suggesting the kinds of things that will solve the customer's problem.

Maher: It's impossible to institutionalize a response [among servers]. But there are a handful of problems that will account for 80 to 90 percent of your complaints. Gather all your customer-contact people together and ask them: "What are our top five or six causes of customer dissatisfaction?" It is key for them to buy into and help set up whatever system you develop, or it won't work.

Once you've made the first list, make another list of actual responses the waitstaff has used to correct those problems. I'm sure in most restaurants there is no explicit policy, and the answers will be all over the place: "Sam does this, but Mary handles it this other way."

Next, ask, "What should we do?" This gives you a chance to analyze the various responses and how well they worked. Look at this waitstaff training process as an internal marketing investment in customer retention.

For example, if one of the common complaints is the food takes too long to arrive, there are some things you should do. For one, educate the customer. Don't say, "It will be ready in a minute," when it really takes about ten minutes to prepare that dish. Learn about the customer. The food might not be taking very long, but it will seem like a long time to the customer if he's in a hurry to get to the airport. Is the food taking too long? Look at the kitchen process and streamline wherever you can.

Heskett: It is extremely important to empower the front line. The key is to empower your staff to respond to a complaint, but also to train them to anticipate and preempt problems—not just react to whatever comes up.

Two business experts offer ways to turn complainers into repeat customers.

There is an implicit guarantee of customer satisfaction in a restaurant. We expect to have a pleasant dining experience when we go out to dinner. Make sure all employees know that no customer will leave dissatisfied. This builds customer and employee retention because of the favorable work environment it fosters.

Besides, the customer does not want to wait while the server finds someone to fix the problem. That just gives the person time to get more upset. The customer's time is valuable and you don't want to tax that with aggravation. If you don't empower the waitstaff—those on the firing line—to react to a complaint immediately, then you risk several compounding problems.

Arguing with a guest about anything is a classic mistake. You cannot win the argument.

If the server has to get a manager to address the problem, he or she has to repeat the details in front of the customer, as well as other parties. That takes time. If he or she doesn't relate the problem just exactly the way the customer views it, a debate could possibly ensue. Arguing with a guest about anything is a classic mistake. You cannot win the argument, and you also alienate other customers within hearing distance. Even the tone of voice used in handling the situation is important. It could imply "We'll fix it, but the customer is wrong." The customer may then be mollified, but won't be satisfied.

What is the best way to win back the customer when there has been a service slip-up?

Heskett: There are all kinds of options from a free drink or dessert all the way up to giving the customer a free meal. But the best I've ever heard was that if—for any reason—the customer was unhappy, the restaurant would refund their money plus an equal amount to pick one of their competitors and "Have a meal on us." Remember, the service experiences customers rave about most are those when the problem was obviously the customer's fault, but the company responded anyway.

Maher: There is a man named Phil Bressler who is Mr. Customer Satisfaction. At one time, he owned about 18 Domino's Pizza franchises in Baltimore, with good and bad locations. In the late 1980s, his Domino's stores were making two and a half times the revenue and twice the profit of the average Domino's. This is not necessarily because of product, but because of service quality.

One time Phil was a guest lecturer at the Harvard Business School. He was there to reveal the secret of his success, and the class was packed. He explained one of the things he did was to have radio spots ready to go whenever it snowed in Baltimore. Snow just paralyzes Baltimore. He did the spots himself, saying something like, "Hi, I'm Phil Bressler of Domino's Pizza here in Baltimore. You know about our guarantee: You get your pizza delivered in 30 minutes or less, or it's FREE. [He never did switch to taking $3 off, like other Domino's franchises.] Well, as you can see, it's snowing outside right now, and there's no way we can get you your pizza in 30 minutes in this kind of weather. So call now for your free pizza."

He'd end up giving away 300 to 400 pizzas every time it snowed. Everybody in the class was stunned, like "Is this guy crazy?" But are those 400 people who got free pizzas going to go anywhere else when a company honors a guarantee like that? And what about all the hundreds of people who did get their pizzas in 30 minutes or less, even though it was snowing? Do you think they'll go any place else after service like that?

Should a restaurant go beyond creating an atmosphere in which complaints are welcome? Should operators actually seek out complaints?

Heskett: Absolutely. You should make it as easy as possible for customers to complain. If you can afford it, install an 800 number. One of the best ideas I've ever heard of was at the Maine Savings Bank. They paid customers $1 for every letter of complaint received.

If a restaurant can somehow obtain the name, address and phone number of guests, it is a very good idea to contact the guests later to make sure they had a pleasant experience. It is vital, however, that whoever makes the call—the maitre d' or the manager or whoever—has the latitude to immediately respond to and remedy any complaints that arise in these follow-up calls.

The lowest rate of repeat business is among people who never complain.

Maher: Eliciting comments is always a good idea. But you've got to make it as simple as possible for the customer. It's easy to yak; it's difficult to sit down and write. Customer-response cards aren't much of an idea, unless perhaps you ask for the customer's card and also ask, "May we call you?"

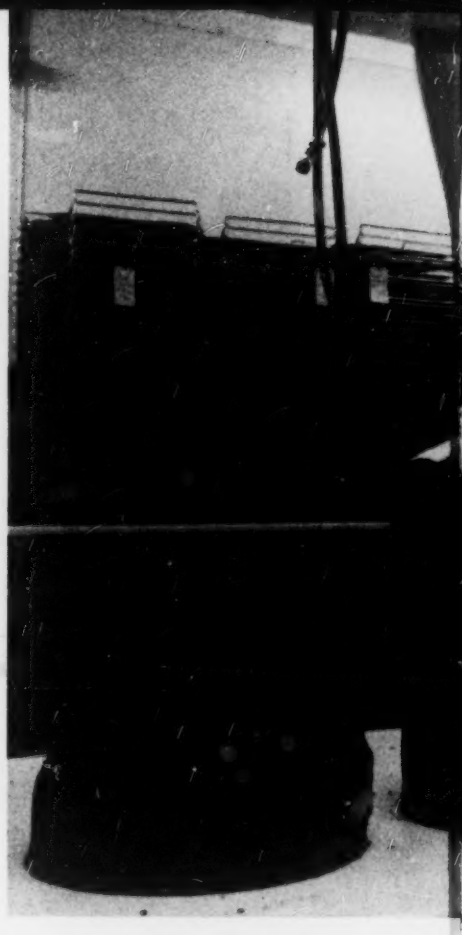
If you have someone call, make sure it is someone nonthreatening—maybe the kitchen manager or someone the customer would not have seen during the visit. Don't approach it from the angle of, "We understand you had a problem here the other evening." Simply say, "We are calling to ask about your dinner with us. How was your service? What did you think overall?"

Personal follow-up can work if it's done right, but it doesn't have to be limited to first-time guests. Say I've eaten some place four times, but this one little thing has always bothered me. If it happens the fifth time, I'm gone. But if someone actually called me up and invited me to talk about that one little thing, I would almost feel in partnership with that person. I'm a customer for life. ❑

Joan E. Herlong is a writer in Greenville, South Carolina.

OPERATORS ACCOMMODATE DISABLED WORKERS

This is the first in a two-part series on how some operators are making their restaurants accessible to people with disabilities. In this article, operators share their experiences in adapting their establishments for employees with disabilities. A future article will discuss accommodating customers with disabilities.



Getting Ready for the ADA

by Jennifer Batty

Beginning in July 1992, the employment regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will go into effect. The purpose of the regulations is to make it easier for those with disabilities to find jobs and to advance in the workplace.

One of the sections of the ADA that will have the greatest impact on foodservice operators is Title I, which prohibits job discrimination against a person because of a disability. On July 26, 1992, the ADA employment regulations covering businesses with 25 or more employees go into effect. Two years later, on July 26, 1994, the employment regulations for businesses with 15 to 24 employees take effect.

But some foodservice operators have chosen to write their own rules instead of waiting for the regulations to be cemented. These operators have realized that providing access to as many customers and potential employees as possible is simply good business—ADA deadline or not. Across the country, foodservice operators have tapped into the pool of workers with disabilities and have discovered nontraditional workers to be assets rather than liabilities.

Jobs, plus much more

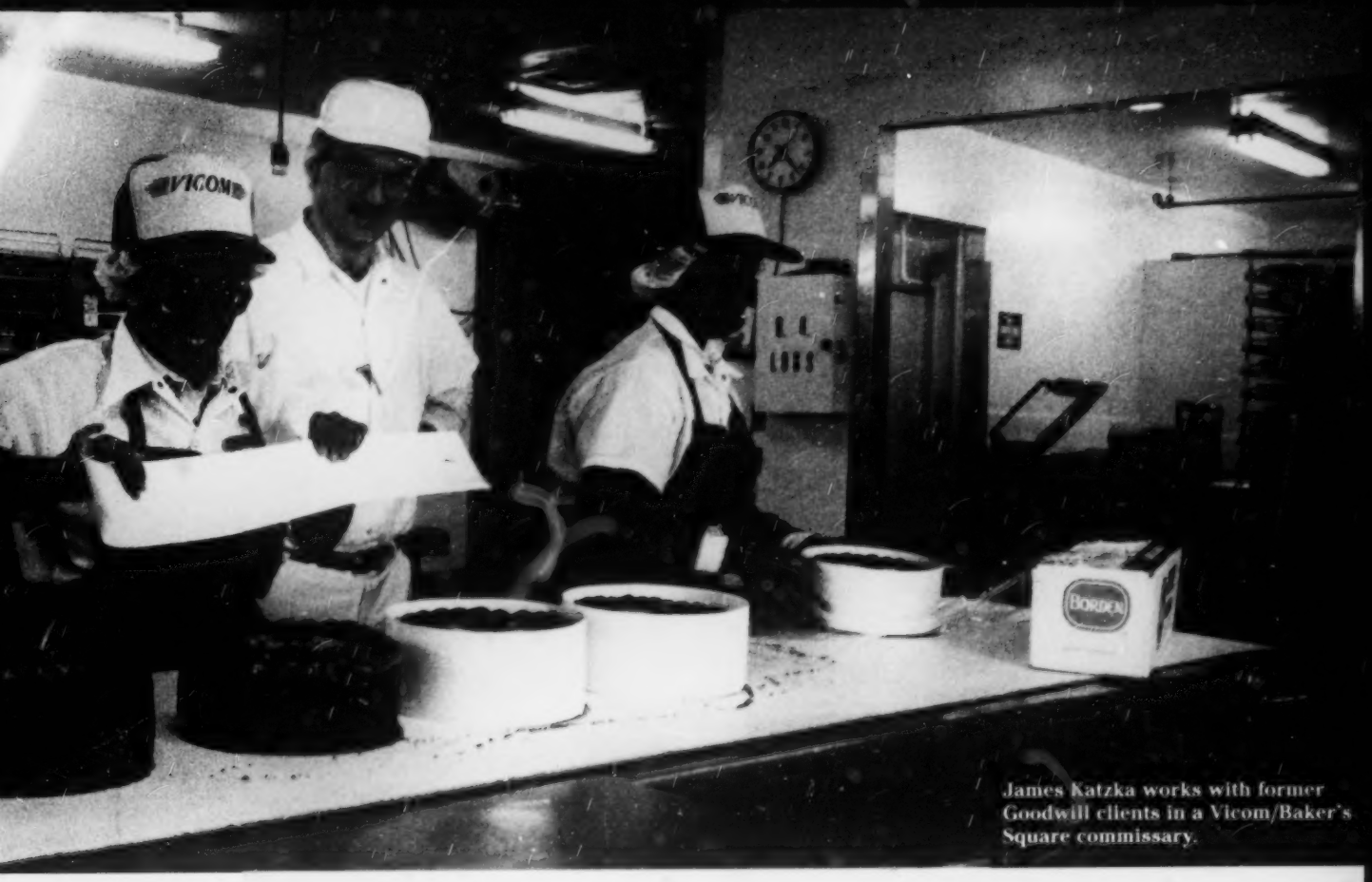
In 1988 Pizza Hut, Inc., began an ambitious nationwide program to hire 2,000 individuals with physical and mental disabilities over a three-year period. By the end of the first year, those initial placement goals were exceeded by 100 percent. The impetus behind this program was as much labor needs for Pizza Hut as charitable concern, says Steve Zivolich, project director for the Jobs Plus program.

"Pizza Hut was faced with a rapid turnover rate, and the cost of recruiting and training employees was mounting. In the last two years we have hired 2,000 Jobs Plus workers, and most are still in those jobs—in every area in the restaurant that is entry level. Some are being promoted to positions with more responsibility," he says.

Zivolich works with state rehabilitation agencies and supported-employment programs that provide training, employee placement and a job coach who trains the person for the position and remains with the person hired for as long as the Jobs Plus worker needs assistance. Pizza Hut currently employs these workers as dishwashers, buspersons, delivery dispatchers, computer operators, delivery persons, custodians and food preparers.

Most Jobs Plus workers are mentally or developmentally impaired, but there are also workers who are hearing impaired or visually impaired. Some workers have physical disabilities and use wheelchairs. "We have found that these [Jobs Plus] workers have better safety records than nondisabled workers, that they are absent much less and that they are very committed to their jobs," says Zivolich. "Our annual national turnover rate for nondisabled workers is 190 percent. With the supported-employment program, the turnover rate for our Jobs Plus workers is 32 percent. That saves us a lot of money in training and recruitment."

But what about the money Pizza Hut had to dole out to adapt the work environment for the employees with disabilities? "We usually spend less than $50 on adaptations in the units. Adaptations don't always have to cost money. It takes creativity," says Zivolich.



James Katzka works with former Goodwill clients in a Vicom/Baker's Square commissary.

An example of that creative thinking is the solution the Jobs Plus staff found for a worker who made pizzas and did not have the cognitive skills to use scales to measure ingredients. Staff members color-coded the numbers on the scales so the worker could measure the correct amount of pizza toppings by making the weight marker stay within a certain color.

A common adaptation, says Zivolich, is adjusting work schedules. Many of the workers who are developmentally or mentally impaired live in group homes with resident counselors. These group homes often have set hours when the residents must be in the house. Also, most of these workers rely on public transportation and often do not want to travel at night. To accommodate a Jobs Plus custodial worker, Pizza Hut might alter the normal cleaning schedule from after closing at night to the early morning before opening.

Job restructuring is also a common adaptation. "We look at a person's assets, and although he may not meet the total job description in the functions he can perform, he can do some parts well. So we split the duties of that job and let him do what he can do well. Then we let another worker handle the other part," Zivolich says.

Phones have been lowered and counters altered for workers in wheelchairs so the employees could take delivery orders. The computers at the customer-service center have talking screens for the employees who are visually impaired.

In an Everett, Washington, Pizza Hut restaurant, Braille labels were installed on the salad bar, and notches were cut in the salad dressing ladles to accommodate Debra Curry, a Jobs Plus employee who is blind and deaf. Curry preps the salad bar for the lunch crowd. By working with the Washington State Vocational Services agency, Jobs Plus was able to secure a teletouch machine that works like a typewriter but produces Braille symbols for Curry to read. This enables her to communicate with her coworkers. Because they worked through a state rehabilitation agency, Pizza Hut did not have to pay for the teletouch machine.

Don Lynch, a Pizza Hut restaurant manager, has been in charge of the Jobs Plus program in the Minnesota and Iowa area for a year and a half. In his Clear Lake, Iowa, store are six workers who have Down syndrome or are mentally retarded. The only modifications he has had to make are altering job descriptions to match the workers' skill levels. "These workers are committed to jobs that some of us would consider menial, but they take great pride in doing their best," says Lynch. "They get increased self-esteem, and we get dedicated employees."

Zivolich and Lynch both stress that staff members must be included in the decision-making process when hiring a worker with disabilities. Pizza Hut has a mentor program that provides training to store managers and staff before a Jobs Plus employee joins their unit. "I call it learning to manage diversity," says Zivolich. "It is a matter of making an overall commitment to managing this sort of program and not just shooting from the hip."

Communication is one of the vital links of this program, and Lynch is attempting to strengthen the lines of communication among Pizza Hut managers. He began a newsletter called *Jobs Plus: News to Use*, that is mailed out to other Pizza Hut manag-

William Moore, Jr., who was born deaf and is unable to speak, found his first job as a Pizza Hut delivery driver in Alexandria, Virginia, in 1987. Moore communicates with written notes and hand signals.

ers and corporate staff. It contains tips on implementing the Jobs Plus program smoothly into a unit. The newsletter also lists duties that could be assigned to Jobs Plus workers and talks about important legislative issues such as the ADA. Lynch envisions the newsletter expanding so that information on accommodating workers with disabilities could be shared among industry professionals nationally and not just internally.

Although Lynch says that he is very supportive of the ADA and wants "the restaurants I'm working with to be on the cutting edge as far as accommodating those with disabilities," the somewhat vague regulations trouble him. One of Lynch's concerns about the ADA is shared by many other foodservice professionals: With the high rate of turnover in the foodservice industry, what happens if an operator makes a $300 modification to a store for a worker with a disability, and then the worker leaves after a couple of months? Lynch hopes that such possibilities will be taken into consideration by federal regulators when ruling on possible discrimination cases.

Zivolich points out that some legislation already benefits the operator who hires those with disabilities—like the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC). "Over the last two years, we have gotten $4.5 million in tax credits. This program provides the largest percentage of TJTC for Pizza Hut," he says.

Pizza Hut's success at recruiting, training and employing persons with disabilities will be acknowledged with an award presented at the National Restaurant Association Show.

Employer goodwill

James Caputo, plant manager at Vicom/Baker's Square Commissary in West Allis, Wisconsin, was "real reluctant" when first approached by Goodwill Industries about hiring workers with disabilities. He admits, "I didn't think they could do assembly-line work."

Goodwill convinced him to give an individual who has Down syndrome a try. The candidate came in and made boxes for the pies produced by the plant for Baker's Square Restaurants and other hotels, restaurants and theme parks. That first Goodwill employee did such a good job that Caputo hired more and more, until 65 percent of the plant's workers were supplied by Goodwill.

"These are some of the best employees I've ever had. They have kept the turnover down, and they are so dependable. They will go through four feet of snow to get here when other employees call from two blocks away and say they can't make it," says Caputo.

Cheryl Axford, program manager for community employment and supported employment, says Goodwill will work with an employer to find the right candidate for a job, help train the person and provide on-site job coaching for as long as needed. "Goodwill has a foodservice training program where our clients learn food prep from A to Z," says Axford.

The foodservice industry is a good place for persons who are developmentally or mentally impaired to work, says Axford, because "the tasks are very repetitive. These people thrive on repetition. Such tasks are not stressful for the individual because they don't ask for great mental demands."

Adaptations to the work environment for these employees have been minor so far, says Axford. Sometimes an individual must stand on a box because he or she is too short. One woman needed brooms, buckets and mops scaled down to match her size. But most often, it is a matter of work-

Employers' responsibilities under the ADA

The central focus of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is to protect disabled individuals from discrimination in employment. As stated in the act itself, "It is the purpose of this Act to provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities." This is accomplished by requiring employers to focus on the qualifications of a person with a disability rather than focusing on the disability itself. For example, an employer may ask an applicant about his or her ability to "perform job-related functions." However, an employer may *not* ask an applicant about the existence, nature or severity of a disability. The ADA also places restrictions on the use of medical examinations used in the screening process.

The other major obligation imposed on employers under the ADA is the duty to make "reasonable accommodations" for individuals with disabilities. Unless an employer can show it

ing out transportation options and work schedules.

Caputo has hired persons with hearing impairments, developmental disabilities and mental impairments, and he has also hired people with disadvantaged backgrounds.

Adaptations made to accommodate the Goodwill workers include getting a clipboard with an attached calculator for a worker who cannot do simple mathematics, putting flashing lights above the oven to alert a hearing-impaired worker that the timer is going off, and adding a shift for workers who can only work for limited amounts of time.

If Goodwill finds a client who is a candidate for employment at the plant, the staff sends him or her for an interview with Caputo and his assistant plant manager, James Katzka. The managers speak with a job coach about the person's disability. Together they try to place him or her in an appropriate job. "We try to determine what a person does best, and then we place the person in a job that offers the best chance for success. We have an overall standard here that we are not going to sacrifice. You have to know their limitations and allow for that," says Katzka.

When nondisabled workers begin jobs at the plant, Caputo says, "We tell them straight up that we have these people here [disabled or disadvantaged workers], and we want their support." If the nondisabled workers don't support the program, Caputo says "they won't be Vicom employees very long."

For a man who was once a reluctant participant in this program, Caputo is now its greatest champion. "When other managers ask me why I hire so many people with disabilities, I tell them to consider how they would feel if they were hit by a car and had brain damage and couldn't find a job. Any of us could end up in that situation," he says.

Part of the corporate culture

After taking part in the 1987 International Special Olympics summer games, staff members of Red Lobster restaurants were discussing how much they enjoyed working with the special athletes. "We asked ourselves why we had to wait four years to work with these people again. That's when we decided to start a formal program for hiring those with disabilities," says Dick Monroe, vice president of public relations for Red Lobster, part of General Mills Restaurants, Inc.

Today, there are between 1,000 and 1,500 persons with disabilities working in Red Lobster restaurants. When Red Lobster launched the program, the company worked with the Logan rehabilitation agency, which provided expertise in how to develop training guidelines, served as counsel to unit managers and provided job coaches to work with the employees

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would result in an "undue hardship," he or she must make accommodations for the disability of an employee who can perform the "essential functions" of the position. For example, a telephone can be readily adapted for someone unable to use his or her hands. Generally, an accommodation will be deemed reasonable (and not an undue hardship) as long as it is not too difficult or expensive to accomplish. This is measured relative to the nature and resources of the employer's business.

The ADA is like the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in that the prohibitions against discrimination in employment apply to the full range of employment practices. That is, an employer may not discriminate against a qualified individual with a disability in regard to application procedures, hiring, promotions, training opportunities, termination or rates of compensation. Specific personnel practices that are prohibited include utilizing screening methods which discriminate against the disabled, using non-job-related criteria which eliminate disabled individuals, utilizing inappropriate test instruments (e.g., giving a written test to a blind person), and failing to make a "reasonable accommodation" in the absence of "undue hardship."

Beginning July 26, 1992, the provisions in the ADA applying to employment will apply only to employers with 25 or more employees. However, this will be expanded to include employers with as few as 15 employees starting in July 1994.

The ADA does not consider an employee or applicant currently using illegal drugs to be a "qualified individual with a disability." Consequently, an employer is not prohibited from taking appropriate action against such individuals. Furthermore, the ADA permits employers to hold alcoholics and those using illegal drugs to the same performance standards as other employees.

The ADA does not address the issue of drug testing in the workplace other than to specify that a test administered for the purpose of determining illegal drug use "shall not be considered a medical examination" as defined under the ADA.

The protection afforded alcoholics and illegal drug users focuses on individuals who have completed or are participating in rehabilitation programs. Employers cannot take action against such individuals unless their job performance is not up to standards or they continue to use illegal drugs.

There are a number of steps employers can take to bring their personnel procedures and policies into compliance with the ADA. The following is a sample of such steps:

- ☐ Review application forms and interviewing procedures.
- ☐ Review the use of medical examinations.
- ☐ Review employment screening tests.
- ☐ Determine whether any current employees are entitled to a "reasonable accommodation."
- ☐ Provide training for all appropriate supervisory personnel to ensure that they are fully aware of their legal responsibilities under the ADA.

As with any review of personnel matters, this should be undertaken in consultation with a qualified labor attorney and human-resources professionals.

—Linda K. Enghagen, J.D.

Linda K. Enghagen is an assistant professor in the Department of Hotel, Restaurant, and Travel Administration at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

with disabilities. "We knew that there was going to be the normal amount of concern when we introduced this program to the managers. So with the help of the rehab agency, we put together a videotape that we showed to our managers to put them more at ease," says Monroe.

The tape showed interviews with managers and employees who had worked with persons with disabilities through their own independent hiring. The message, says Monroe, was that it was normal to be wary of this new working relationship but for the managers to give these new employees a chance.

Monroe hopes that "reason will prevail in the writing of the ADA rules" regarding accommodating employees with disabilities. "This is going to take a lot of sincerity and common sense. It would not be reasonable to expect a person in a wheelchair to be employed as a server," says Monroe. Many [foodservice] groups have done a lot to hire those with disabilities without having to be told to do it. You shouldn't force people to make excessive changes," he says. "But the majority of our employees support [Red Lobster's] program. It is part of our corporate culture now, like running good cost control."

No other job would do

In 1988, Ernest McGee, Jr. began working as a chef at The Sagamore Hotel in Bolton Landing, New York. "I was what's known as a 'jammer' in the kitchen. I got things done," says McGee. But in 1989, McGee was in an automobile accident that resulted in paralysis from the waist down. McGee says one of his first thoughts after learning he was a paraplegic was "that I wouldn't be able to do what I'd been doing all my life. I'd been in foodservice since I was 14. I tried to think of other jobs I could do, because I didn't know if I had the stamina to do this [be a chef] 365 days a year with all the long hours. But I

Try to see it our way

Judy Holt is a polio survivor who uses a wheelchair to get around at home and in the workplace. Currently employed at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, she agreed to share with ***Restaurants USA*** *some practical ideas about making accommodations in the workplace for employees with disabilities.*

Have you ever wanted to hire a disabled person or wanted your business to be accessible, but didn't know how to go about it? Now, with the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, you may have an additional motivation to make your business accessible. With 40 years of experience in a wheelchair, having raised two children and having worked full-time for the past 15 years, I have a few suggestions.

As an employer, you need to realize that each disabled person is an individual. The wheels of a wheelchair are no different from the wheels of your auto. The person driving is a human being with desires and ambitions, just like you. They have families, homes, personal needs and feelings.

As an employer or business owner, you need offices and buildings which are accessible. First, you need parking spaces designated by the wheelchair symbol for use by drivers who are disabled, curb cuts, and doors you can get into (automatic doors or doors with automatic buttons). Inside, you need floor coverings that are easy to rotate on (no thick carpets), work stations with space to move around in, copying machines at a workable level for a person sitting in a wheelchair (sometimes just removing casters on a machine cabinet can make it accessible), files placed in lower drawers so they are reachable and computer keyboards that are functional to the disabled employee. Telephones with headsets are an option, as are phones with speed dialing so that frequently dialed numbers only require that one button be pushed instead of many. Having an office with a water fountain that is reachable to a person in a chair is great. If it can't be changed, how about reachable cups placed alongside the older units? Many adaptations like this are easy to provide with a little forethought.

Bathrooms must be accessible, with doors wide enough for wheelchairs to get through and doors that are easy to open. This only requires that the door's closure unit be adjusted to open easily for individuals with limited strength or that the closure apparatus be removed completely. Bathrooms should have at least one stall with a wider door so that chairs can go inside and the door will close. I've been in some restrooms where I could get in the stall but had no room to position my chair or where I couldn't shut the stall door.

I also prefer slide locks on stall doors, rather than turn locks. Some have magnet locks, which are fine if you have a slide lock for a backup. I have a tendency to position my chair

Judy Holt

against the door, and too often the magnet lock will come undone with any pressure against the door, which can be an unexpected surprise for everyone. I also like to see the international wheelchair symbol on the inside and outside of stall doors. People often use the handicapped stall because it's bigger, but as a person who can use only this stall, it is frustrating to have to wait when the other stall is empty and the situation is desperate.

Stalls should be equipped with two or three handrails, but problems arise when rails are placed too close to a heating element or to the toilet-paper dispensers. Dispensers also need to be close enough to the stool for the user to reach. Remember that some individuals have a limited reach. Sanitary napkin dispensers and receptacles should also be positioned on the walls so that a person in a wheelchair is able to reach them.

knew I wouldn't be happy doing anything else," says McGee.

McGee entered rehabilitation therapy and strove to master skills he would need to resume his craft. He also began working with Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) on securing adaptive equipment to help him return to work.

Vicki Starr, a vocational rehabilitation counselor at VESID, spoke with the management at The Sagamore about McGee's chances of returning to his chef's position there. "I told them we could purchase a Moto-Stand for him, which is similar to a wheelchair, but it helps the paralyzed person stand up and move around. It wasn't a cost to the restaurant to purchase the equipment," says Starr.

McGee says Starr met with The Sagamore chefs and general managers and assured them that he could still do the job. "She pointed out that they didn't have me there in the beginning to stand and run around, but to create. And I could still create—I created through my hands and mind before and I could still do that," he says.

"Now the quantity of my work may have gone down, but the quality has gone up. I take on projects that I know I can do my best on in the time frame given—I've learned how to delegate more."

The pair didn't have to work too hard to convince The Sagamore staff, who wanted McGee back from the beginning. "Our initial feeling was that we would do anything we could to get him back. He was a very valuable employee, and we didn't want to lose him," recalls Lilian LaPrairie, personnel manager at The Sagamore.

There was some apprehension at the corporate level about McGee's safety and about insurance liability when he was using the Moto-Stand. But after witnessing McGee's skillful handling of the equipment, LaPrairie wrote a memo to corporate headquarters, and they agreed to let McGee return to the kitchen.

Adaptations to make the hotel accessible for McGee were minimal, because The Sagamore's sprawling operation already had a series of ramps and freight elevators for transporting large shipments to and from the hotel. McGee says he can make his way through the hotel in both his wheelchair and Moto-Stand. In the kitchen, the engineering staff drilled holes into the metal working tables so that McGee can hook his transport belt (which wraps around his waist) into the holes and stand with the aid of leg braces when not in the Moto-Stand. A bathroom was also remodeled so that McGee would have access to it in his wheelchair.

"The costs for adaptations were absolutely worthwhile. We are very glad to have Ernest back. We never thought his disability would hamper his abilities as a chef, and we are very pleased with his work since his return," says LaPrairie.

McGee says he feels very fortunate that he has been able to continue to pursue the career he loves. He knows others who have not been so fortunate. "I've met other people who had active, demanding jobs that they can't return to because of their disability," he says. "I'm very happy to be back in the kitchen. I've always wanted to be an executive chef someday, and I knew that it would be difficult. It's going to be even more difficult now, but I'm still going to try." ❑

Jennifer Batty is a communications specialist at the National Restaurant Association.

Faucets need to be easy to use. The one-handled faucet is probably the easiest. Those designed to save water, where you hold the faucet down in order to make the water run, are a disaster. There is no way a disabled person can hold the water on, use soap and rinse his or her hands at the same time. Plus, you get soap on your hands and can't rinse the water off and so you keep putting your soapy hands on the faucet. I'm not sure even an able-bodied person can handle those faucets well. In addition, soap dispensers should be located close to the sink.

After washing your hands, drying them can also be a challenge. Some restrooms have paper-towel dispensers. Once again, they need to be low enough to be easily reached. Also, a towel dispenser should be positioned so a wheelchair can get up to it. A common obstacle is a wastebasket placed under the dispenser or close by. Blow dryers are often the easiest to use, as long as there is clearance underneath so that a person in a wheelchair can make use of them.

A mirror low enough to see yourself is a luxury. Many bathrooms have nice mirrors, but they are for people who are standing. I would think any innovative employer could place an additional mirror beside or below the existing mirror to accommodate a wheelchair user.

Bathroom floors are usually tile. The only problem with tile floors is when slick wax is used. My worst fear is a slick floor and the thought of having to be rescued. Please use nonslick wax.

Another suggestion is a coatrack or coat tree with a hook positioned low so that employees and patrons who use wheelchairs can hang up their coats. Once again, this need not be a major project. You can weld or bolt a lower hook to a metal coat tree as an option.

Last, but not least, door handles should be used instead of doorknobs. Some manufacturers make very smooth, round doorknobs. They are pretty, but they should not be put on public bathroom doors, where they cause problems for older people as well as for people with disabilities.

These are only a few ideas that an employer can use to accommodate employees with disabilities. You need not be afraid to hire a disabled person. Any modifications you make will prove to be assets when you find how valuable this individual is to your work force, and many modifications benefit your customers as well. Just remember that disabled people are individuals, and ask for input from them, since they know what works best for their own needs. As an employed person with a disability, I know that when I job-hunt, the duties of the job are only one of the things I look at. I also look for a workable job site with a bathroom I can use and a building I can get into each morning.

Most disabled people are eager to work, and research shows they make top-notch employees. If you make your business accessible, you will make all disabled people feel welcome, and you may just end up with a valuable employee as well.

—Judy Hoit

TO KIDS' M

by Diane Welland, M.S. R.D.

More than ever, children are dining out in restaurants—with their families, of course. This influx of children into the restaurant scene has not been lost on restaurant operators. Children's selections on menus have increased, and many restaurants now offer kids a special menu.

But not all menus for children take nutrition into account, and many parents seem more intent on pacifying children in restaurants than on feeding them properly. The next wave of concern among parents may well be about nutrition in restaurants, as parents begin to ask themselves, "Are our kids eating well when we go out to eat?"

Meeting children's needs

A growing number of experts agree that children over two years of age should consume a low-fat, low-cholesterol diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables, just as adults should. The National Cholesterol Education Program Panel recently released a report supporting this fact.

This idea may come as a surprise to many parents and restaurateurs. Studies show that the items most frequently ordered for children in restaurants are soft drinks, french fries, hamburgers, pizza and fried chicken, in that order. The fact that there is a growing number of children with high cholesterol signifies that fat is an area many parents need to be concerned about. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children over two years of age consume a balanced diet with no more than 30 percent of calories from fat. Adequate calories and other important nutrients that children need can easily be provided on this lower-fat diet.

"Most of the parents I see are worried that their kids aren't getting enough protein," says Ann Litt, a private-practice nutritionist in the Washington DC area who specializes in children's nutrition. "But most kids get all the protein they need easily," she says.

In the book *How To Get Your Kid to Eat . . . But Not Too Much*, author and children's nutritionist Ellyn Satter outlines the recommended daily food pattern for children ages two through ten. She points out that children actually need about half the protein that an adult does, and she emphasizes reducing excessive fat in the diet. According to Satter, a typical nutritious diet for children should include 2 cups of milk, 2 to 3 ounces of protein, 4 servings of bread and cereals, and 4 servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Serving sizes should be smaller than adult portions.

About kids' food

Aside from different nutritional requirements, kids' tastes can vary considerably from those of an adult. "Kids eat foods that are familiar to them," says Satter. "That's why one of the most important things parents should teach their children is to learn to eat a variety of foods. But the parent should not put pressure on the child to eat." The more foods the child is exposed to, the broader the child's range of food acceptance will be.

Still, even children who are exposed to a wide variety of foods have their quirks. According to Ann Litt, it is not so much that children do not like spicy foods, but that children do not seem to like foods that are mixed together. Indeed, mixtures such as casseroles and stews may not be popular among the kid set. "Children also tend to be finicky about how foods are presented, and mixtures are not usually that appealing to children," says Litt. That is one reason why the Silver Diner in Rockville, Maryland, serves its children's entrees with sauces or gravies on the side. "We've found that children don't like sauces on their food," says manager Darryl McKinney. The Silver Diner's children's entree of hot turkey and mashed potatoes is always served with the gravy on the side.

Texture is another strong factor when it comes to marketing restaurant food to children. Satter's book says that until the age of eight or nine a child is not adept at chewing and swallowing.

Both Satter and Litt recommend serving meats that are cut in small pieces, such as shredded chicken and hamburger. "Fish has a great texture for children," says Litt, "and it's an excellent food as well." Restaurants would also do well to serve moist, tender meat that is easy to chew.

Improving kids' menus

There are many ways to offer healthful items on a children's menu. The trick is in pleasing both the parents and the child. Many times, the restaurateur merely has to expand an existing children's menu by adding some healthful items. Here are some ideas to keep in mind when developing a more healthy children's menu.

Offer nutritious choices. Soups and salads are sometimes excluded from children's menus. But at Zoopa in Seattle, soups and salads are all that is on the menu. According to Craig Russell, senior general manager of Zoopa, the help-yourself soup, salad and pasta bar caters to families. "About 40 percent of our customers fall into the family category," says

ENUS

Russell. "The kids get to pick and choose what they want to eat, and they love it." Zoopa offers many fresh fruits and vegetables, and children under 5 years of age eat free, and older children eat for half price.

Pasta is another sure winner to include on a kids' menu. Loaded with carbohydrates and low in fat, spaghetti with tomato sauce is an excellent high-energy food and an old standby that can be found on almost all children's menus. "The pasta bar is the most popular station among the children," notes Russell. "They particularly like the macaroni with different shapes, like rotini and shells."

Expanding children's choices on menus can be an important marketing tool. Along with regular kids' meals, the children's menu at the Boca Raton Resort & Club in Boca Raton, Florida, offers soup, a house salad, a fruit and cottage cheese platter, and (of course) peanut butter and jelly. The variety of children's items the club offers helps to encourage families to visit.

Another option for foodservice operators who wish to increase their healthy choices for children is to modify traditional kids' food. Using ground turkey instead of ground beef and serving broiled fish instead of fish sticks are two changes that are easy to make. At the Disney-run fast food outlet Mickey's Kitchen, good nutrition is a priority. Located in a shopping mall in Montclair, California, Mickey's Kitchen offers children's items such as meatless Mickey burgers, turkey dogs and chicken salad. The festive Disney atmosphere further enhances the children's appeal.

Include healthy garnishes and accompaniments. Wholesome garnishes represent an easy way to put nutrition on the plate. Celery and carrot sticks are excellent garnishes, and many kids like the crunchy texture. Side dishes are another way to balance out a meal. Instead of serving french fries or potato chips, The Inn at Glen Echo, in Glen Echo, Maryland, serves each children's meal with toasted blue cornmeal chips and a piece of fresh fruit. "The children like the fruit because it is sweet and juicy. The parents like it because the kids are eating fruit," says general manager Buddy Goetzger.

Serve finger foods. Children like to use their hands when they eat, and they frequently pick up food with their fingers. Bite-sized foods like cheese sticks, whole grain breads and crackers can be easily handled by kids.

Serve a complete meal. According to Satter's book, a typical children's meal should include the following: protein such as meat, fish, poultry, eggs or beans; bread or cereal; fruit or vegetable (or both); and milk or cheese. At the Samurai Japanese Steak, Seafood & Sushi Bar in Washington DC, the children's entree comes with chicken or steak, oriental vegetables, steamed rice, and a soup or salad. Fruit juices are readily available and provide a good source of vitamins A and C.

Serve child-sized portions of adult meals. This may be one of the simplest and most overlooked ways to add children's entrees to a menu. Because the item is already on the menu, there is no extra preparation involved. At the same time, the child does not have to feel different or left out, because he or she can eat the same as the "grown-ups" do. Smaller versions of adult entrees often warrant only a slight change. On its regular menu, The Inn at Glen Echo serves a chicken tarragon entree which appears as a sandwich version on the children's menu.

Make it fun. If children are going to be a part of your clientele, the best way to keep this group happy is to make eating enjoyable. Most restaurants give children crayons, coloring books or games to play while waiting. The Ritz-Carlton in Houston even goes so far as to give each child under 12 a toy.

An exciting place for children to go to is the Samurai Japanese Steak, Seafood & Sushi Bar. At this restaurant, Japanese chefs put on a show for children as they prepare food in front of them. Master chefs twirl knives and slice food, and servers are dressed in traditional Japanese clothes. The show is such a hit that many schools bring their classes in regularly for lunch. It is all part of making a child's meal both an enjoyable and nutritious event. ❑

Diane Welland is manager/staff nutritionist at the National Restaurant Association.

Hurst touts healthy kids' menus

Nutrition on children's menus was a topic of discussion at the recent International Food Media Conference held in Dallas in February. National Restaurant Association President Michael Hurst addressed an audience of 100 food editors and reporters on the subject.

Although more than half of restaurants offer special menus for children and many feature healthy items, Hurst pointed to studies which show that parents often pass up nutritious offerings when ordering for kids. "The majority of fast food chains are offering healthful options, and one chain even has celery and carrot sticks in packets—an excellent finger food for children," noted Hurst. "These items are available, but parents are not ordering them for their children.

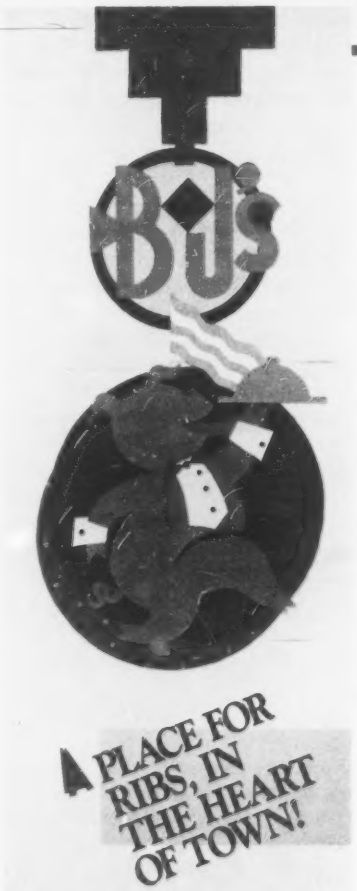
"I would guess that a similar situation exists in tableservice restaurants," continued Hurst. "The parent orders a hamburger or french fries for the child because the food is familiar and the child will eat it without a fuss."

Hurst went on to propose that restaurateurs, parents, health organizations and the news media team up to promote healthy restaurant dining for children. "First, we must educate parents about the importance of a low-fat, high-fiber diet for children," said Hurst. "Then we must develop new, healthful menu items with immediate appeal for children. There is room here for considerable cooperative effort," Hurst told the audience.

THE 1991 GREAT

DESIGN, MERCHANDISI

by Jennifer Batty



By the time the final judging for the National Restaurant Association's 28th annual Great Menu Contest rolled around, one staff member's office had been usurped by box upon box of menus. Tucked away in those boxes were almost 600 menus from every corner of the United States as well as from abroad.

One menu was printed on a regulation football (tee included), another was glued to a green woven fan, and another menu was tucked away in the center of a novel. Menus were adorned with photographs or drawings of such things as pigs in bow ties, a surfing carrot, ancient Hawaiian kings and a smug-looking gopher.

On March 12 the menus were carted into a conference room at the association's Washington DC headquarters and placed before six menu-savvy judges. The judges represented food industry publications, newspapers and design firms, and all had earned their stripes as Great Menu Contest judges in previous years.

Menus entered in the Great Menu Contest were judged on design, merchandising power and imagination. Each judge brought his or her own expertise to the judging. "Impact is important," said judge Michael Bartlett, editor-in-chief of *Restaurants & Institutions*. "There should be integration between the art and the descriptions to create an overall impression. The menu should be memorable—like the food in the restaurant."

Mark Knauer of the design firm Knauer Incorporated in Highland Park, Illinois, said, "First and foremost there has to be something distinctive about the menu. And second, it has to be appropriate for the operation. You should be able to get a feel for the concept from the menu, if it is thoroughly conceived."

As the menus passed from hand to hand, the judges joked with each other about the occasional incorrect spelling of menu items and one menu that unfolded to the size of a pup tent. Within each of nine categories, the three highest-scoring menus were chosen as winners. Judges often retrieved menus with lower scores to debate their merits and then recast their votes.

The winners within each category were then considered for the three grand-prize slots. After much debate the top winners were chosen.

One entry that demonstrated a great deal of research was that of the first grand prize winner: China Coast Restaurants, operated by General Mills Restaurants, Inc., of Orlando, Florida. "It was the clearest Chinese restaurant menu I've ever seen in my life," said contest judge Jann Malone, food editor of the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. "The menu did an excellent job of educating mainstream America about Chinese cuisine by linking the various cuisines with the regions they came from on a map—and the menu explained the differences in cooking style."

The second-place grand prize winner was Ellington's room-service menu from Embassy Suites Hotel North in Indianapolis. The menu had a triangular design that allowed it to stand up beside a telephone or on top of the TV in a guest's hotel room. "That menu was a favorite from the minute I saw it," said contest judge Scott Allmendinger, editor of *Restaurant Business* magazine. "It solves a very basic problem of how to entice people to order room service. Most room-service menus are heavy, leather-bound jobs hidden in a drawer in the room. This menu stood up and had the room-service number on each page. It was brightly colored and had clever graphics. It sold the product in a simple yet effective manner."

Jann Malone also thought Ellington's menu had great merit. "As a woman who travels frequently, I rely a lot on room service and I appreciated that this wasn't a 200-page notebook telling you everything available in the hotel and how to order a limo.

MENU CONTEST

G POWER & IMAGINATION

That's not what I need to know. This got right to the point," she said.

A sturdy menu with a distinctive design won third grand prize. Boogies Diner, headquartered in Joppa, Maryland, entered a menu designed like a jukebox, with metal binders holding the pages in the center like music selections are displayed in a jukebox. "Boogies' menu was clever, and it made ordering a meal as easy as punching up a number on the jukebox," said Rob Kasper of the *Baltimore Sun*.

Allmendinger said, "Boogies' menu looked like it would stand up to wear and tear. People who go to a place like that would be inclined to fiddle with things like they would with a jukebox. But in this case, the restaurant is making $5 or $6 on menu selections instead of 25 cents on jukebox selections."

Most of the judges agreed that this year's entries were of better quality than those entered in previous years. Some judges expressed surprise that such strong entries were found in the Average Check $8–$15 Per Person category. "The $8–$15 category was exceptional this year," said Knauer. "I think it's indicative of what's happening in the industry with the growth of more casual, midscale operations. The $8–$15 market is very competitive, but they don't take themselves as seriously as the upscale segment. So they have more room to have fun when designing their menus."

Another surprise was noted by judge Scott Allmendinger. "We were all braced to have every single heart-healthy item highlighted," said Allmendinger, knowing that restaurant operators are trying to win over health-conscious diners. "But these menus did a good job of subtly pinpointing these items, as well as marking new menu items, chef recommendations, spicy items or quick entrees. That is good merchandising."

The judges, of course, also brought their own pet peeves and subjective opinions about menus. They disagreed over what was more important: visual impact or well-written copy. "A menu has to have aesthetic

appeal—something different and creative about it," said designer Knauer. One menu that he thought combined visual elements in a sophisticated and effective way was that of Leona's Restaurants in Chicago, which placed third in the $8–$15 category. "It presented the products differently from any other menu I saw. It had photos, descriptions and illustrations, and they all worked together in a pleasing way."

For Rob Kasper the criteria was pretty simple. "Basically, I expected each menu to make me hungry. I looked carefully at the copy—graphics are secondary."

Malone, too, remarked on the importance of the menu copy. "I was impressed by menus that told a story about the food being sold at that restaurant. I look at a menu for information, and I dislike it when the type is too small or when the graphics interfere with the words and you have to struggle to make out the entree description," she said.

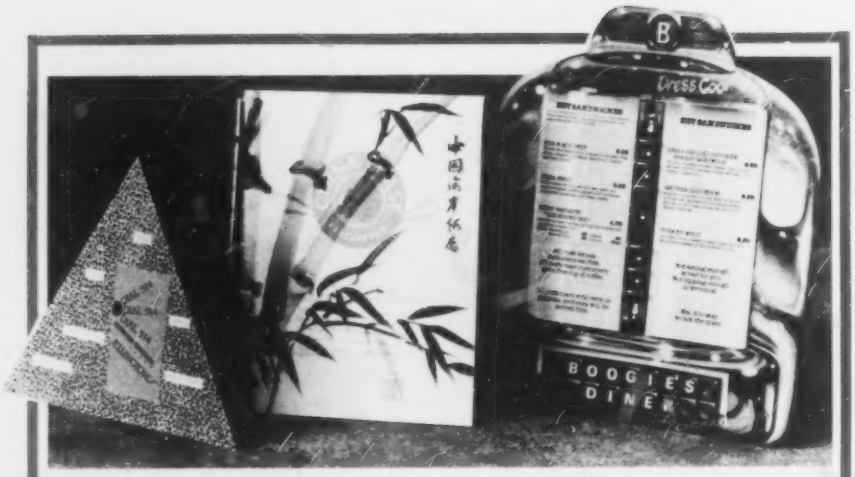
Readability often tipped the scales for entries during the judging. If judges had to lean back in their chairs and stretch the menu to arm's length or whisk their glasses off and squint at the type, then the entry was in trouble. After squinting at several menus, Gary Turner of G.B. Decorative Design Company, Inc., in Alexandria, Virginia, said, "I have often been confronted with situations where the light isn't the greatest in a restaurant, and then you have to decide between 9,000 items listed in minuscule type. You sit there desperately, knowing your turn to order is coming, and in the end, you just have to guess." All the judges said that excess copy on a menu turned them off and thought it would most likely intimidate the typical diner. A short, evocative description following menu items seemed to impress the judges the most.

"Simply phrased statements were the best. Some menus were too clever," said Kasper. "Copy on menus is not intended to show how funny the copywriters are. If being clever helps get the information to the diners, that's fine. But if it gets in the way, then that's a detraction." He said Willie C's Cafe & Bar, in Wichita, Kansas, was judicious when it came to being clever. Their menu won first place in the Average Check Under $8 Per Person category. Willie C's diner-style menu had clever phrases set in triangles at random spots on the menu.

The judges were hard on misspelled words. "I took off points for misspelled words. It is unforgivable when you make that kind of financial commitment not to do a little research and have properly spelled words on your menu," said Allmendinger.

Durability in a menu also earned points with the judges. "You have to ask how well these menus would stand up to the stress and strain of the restaurant atmosphere, with greasy hands and excessive handling. Some of these seemed bullet-proof, and others would have to be replaced almost weekly," said Allmendinger.

For sheer staying power, it would



1991 Great Menu Contest Winners

Grand Prize Winners

☐ *First Place:* China Coast Restaurants, General Mills Restaurants, Inc., Orlando, FL

☐ *Second Place:* Embassy Suites Hotel North (Ellington's Room-Service Menu), Indianapolis, IN

☐ *Third Place:* Boogies Diner, Joppa, MD

Restaurant: Average Check Under $8 Per Person

☐ *First Place:* Willie C's Cafe & Bar, Wichita, KS

☐ *Second Place:* Chancery, DeRosa Corporation, Wauwatosa, WI

☐ *Third Place:* Country Kitchen, International, Minneapolis, MN

Restaurant: Average Check $8–$15 Per Person

☐ *First Place:* China Coast Restaurants, General Mills Restaurants, Inc., Orlando, FL

☐ *Second Place:* El Torito Restaurants, Inc. (Dinner Menu), Irvine, CA

☐ *Third Place:* Leona's Restaurants, Chicago, IL

Restaurant: Average Check Over $15 Per Person

☐ *First Place:* Outlaws Steakhouse & Cantina, Orlando, FL

☐ *Second Place:* Smith Bros. Fish Shanty, DeRosa Corporation, Wauwatosa, WI

☐ *Third Place:* Dakota's Restaurants, Inc., Dallas, TX

Institutional Foodservice

☐ *First Place:* The High Plains Inn, USAF Dining Facility, Malmstrom AFB, Great Falls, MT

☐ *Second Place:* Iowa State University, Dept. of Residence Food Service, Ames, IA

☐ *Third Place:* Mount Carmel East Hospital, Nutritional Services Dept., Columbus, OH

Banquet/Catering

☐ *First Place:* Holiday Inns Worldwide, Memphis, TN

☐ *Second Place:* Hale Koa Hotel, Honolulu, HI

☐ *Third Place:* Hyatt Regency Miami, Miami, FL

Specialty

☐ *First Place:* Embassy Suites Hotel North (Ellington's Room-Service Menu), Indianapolis, IN

☐ *Second Place:* Red Robin (Children's Menu), Seattle, WA

☐ *Third Place:* Lime Rickey's (Beverage Menu), Prime Restaurant Group, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

Greatest Merchandising Power

☐ *First Place:* El Torito Restaurants, Inc. (Summer Menu), Irvine, CA

☐ *Second Place:* Chancery, DeRosa Corporation, Wauwatosa, WI

☐ *Third Place:* Chi-Chi's, Inc., Louisville, KY

Most Imaginative

☐ *First Place:* Aldo Baldo Ristorante, Big 4 Restaurants, Inc., Phoenix, AZ

☐ *Second Place:* B.J.'s A Place for Ribs, Selinsgrove, PA

☐ *Third Place:* Boogies Diner, Joppa, MD

Best Design

☐ *First Place:* Boogies Diner, Joppa, MD

☐ *Second Place:* Chancery, DeRosa Corporation, Wauwatosa, WI

☐ *Third Place:* Fairways Cafe, The Breakers, Palm Beach, FL

seem that the metal-covered menu of Aldo Baldo Ristorante of Phoenix, Arizona, was a shoo-in. A few judges rattled it on the conference table and worried about the ruckus the metal menus might make as dozens of diners perused them at once. In the end, the judges could not ignore the innovative design, the likelihood that the menu cover would not have to be replaced until the next century and the metal binders that would make changing menu pages a snap.

Two menus that drew attention because of their design were entries from Chancery of Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, and B.J.'s A Place for Ribs, in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania. Both had a center-spread design and used cartoons and graphics to liven the message. "The center-spread design works well with menus because you open it up, and it's all right in front of you. I don't like leafing through a menu. I don't go to a restaurant to read a book," said Bartlett.

Self-deprecating humor and outrageous cartoons were the order of the day for Chancery's menu. The front cover featured a cartoon character with a head made of cheese playing the piano, while a bikini-clad tomato perched on top of the piano.

Knauer said Chancery's menu showed "a good balance of copy and distraction. The menu items are easy to read and are marked to denote new items, which is good merchandising. I think it is a really fun menu to look at, and it sets the tone for an enjoyable meal."

With the back-to-basics theme still gaining in popularity among the public, the judges agreed that statements on the menu of a commitment to provide customers with first-rate food and service were both prudent and appealing. "The idea of a high level of service and quality should come through on the menu," said Bartlett. "The menu should be more than just menu items. Statements like 'In business for 86 years' or 'Everything comes from our garden out back' make a huge statement about the restaurant to the diner." ❑

Jennifer Batty is a communications specialist at the National Restaurant Association.

FRESH APPROACHES TO FAST FOOD

The newest niche: quickservice menus made from scratch.

by Toni Lydecker

Chefs in white-tablecloth restaurants have always been proud of using only the freshest ingredients and making every menu item from scratch.

Now some owners of quickservice restaurants are starting to take similar pride in freshness.

Meeting high standards for ingredient quality and preparation is no simple matter. It is even more difficult in a setting where customers start drumming their fingers if the wait lasts more than a few minutes and where—no matter how delicious the cheeseburger or miso soup might be—they expect the tab to be modest. Yet a growing number of entrepreneurs are taking on this challenge, convinced that the market is ripe for concepts that tantalize customers' taste buds while saving them time and money.

Menu directions

Hamburgers, barbecue, burritos—sounds like a typical quickservice menu. But there's nothing run-of-the-mill about Goode Company's food. In tribute to the company's fresh-tastes-better philosophy, long lines snake out the doors of its Houston restaurants.

By butchering its own meat, Goode Company maintains control over quality and processing. It can guarantee, for instance, that the beef in a lunchtime burger was ground just that morning. French fries, whole wheat buns and special toppings such as sauteed mushrooms and salsa are all made in house. Like the burgers, barbecue is grilled over mesquite and served with sauce made in 60-gallon batches every couple of days.

Other operators are bypassing standard ethnic favorites such as tacos and pizza in favor of more exotic foreign fare. Focaccia Fiorentina, a small delivery and catering company in Manhattan, has won over jaded corporate customers with an Italian specialty few others were offering: focaccia sandwiches made with unusual fillings (see sidebar).

Athens Marketplace Cafe in Phoenix, Arizona, is a new fast food concept that celebrates the flavors of freshly made Greek food. Two units are operating, and there are plans to franchise more. The mixture of beef and lamb used for gyros contains no fillers and is seasoned with 30 spices for authentic flavor, according to Ron Boat, president of Greek Specialties Corp., the parent company. Rather than relying on a powdered mix, as some Greek restaurants do, the company grinds its own garbanzo beans for falafel and uses fresh spinach in the spanakopita filling.

Other menu items interpret Greek cooking more freely. For example, the lavosh (an Armenian cracker bread sometimes known as Greek pizza) has a topping that includes spicy jalapeno and American cheeses as well as feta. The menu also includes a Mediterranean black-bean soup coupled with a feta muffin.

Scoring nutrition points

As Americans show a growing interest in healthful eating, mega-chains are racing to improve the nutritional profiles of their menus. But they could be outpaced by smaller companies with creative and healthful quickservice menus.

An emphasis on good nutrition ties together the eclectic menu of Bless Your Heart Inc., a company based in Midland, Texas, that now has eight units. Owner Steve Plummer, who opened the first 30-seat store in a location where four restaurants had

failed, knew he was onto a good idea when business soared the first month.

When developing the menu, Plummer brought in dietitians to review the heart-healthy collection of soups, sandwiches and salads. Later on, Plummer bought computer software to analyze the nutritional makeup of menu items.

The results of this research are quesadillas made with whole wheat tortillas, cholesterol-free quiche containing nonfat milk solids, and vegetarian burritos. Bless Your Heart makes its own sour cream and nonfat yogurt for chicken enchiladas and other dishes, and cooks go heavier on spices than on salt. In addition, the restaurants use mozzarella in lieu of higher-fat cheeses such as cheddar.

Joseph Seeman believes his soon-to-open restaurant Out to Lunch Naturally will appeal to mainstream customers and health enthusiasts alike in Albany, New York. "The fruits and vegetables, natural sodas and juices, and whole wheat baked goods will be part of a multiethnic menu, and the decor will give it a popular appeal," he says.

Buying and prepping

These companies have found that reliance on fresh ingredients translates into somewhat lower food costs, but

Meeting high standards for ingredient quality is difficult in a setting where customers start drumming their fingers if the wait lasts more than a few minutes.

can lead to higher labor costs. To control both cost categories and to maintain quality control, most of these quickservice operations centralize at least some of their food production.

For example, the staff assembling orders at Goode Company's taqueria/burger place and two barbecue restaurants work with components prepared in the company's nearby commissary, which also preps food for Goode Company's full-service seafood operation. The commissary is organized into three departments—a bakery, a butchery and a production area. Within each one, staff members are cross-trained so that the work flow can be managed smoothly.

Meat, sauces and falafel served in Greek Specialties Corp.'s restaurants are prepped in the company's processing plant. In addition, one unit has a small commissary where the spinach mix for spanakopita and other vegetables are processed. As a sideline, some product is sold to retail operations.

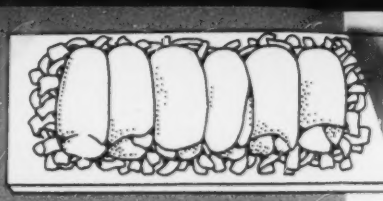
Central processing is more cost efficient and could be a springboard for expansion. "We're trying to modernize the image of Greek fast food," says Boat. "Most restaurants have been run by someone happy with one unit, but we'd like to put together a program that can support in-plant feeding, airports and shopping malls."

Bless Your Heart tests recipes in the kitchen of one store, and muffins and other baked items are tested in another. Soups and hot entrees are developed in a third. Salad dressings, including marinated mushroom, 900 Island and avocado, are available by the pint to customers.

Speedy service

Even when most food is prepped ahead of time, meeting customers' expectations for quick service can be a challenge. A freshly made french fry is "a lot more trouble" to prep and cook than a frozen one, says Pat McCarley, director of operations for Goode Company. "It's harder to make it come out crisp. But when it's done, you taste the potato, not just the oil it was cooked in." The hand-cut fries are blanched in soybean oil, then fried at the last minute.

McCarley is concerned, however, about the difference in service times for burgers and Mexican items in the operation that serves both. Because enchiladas are rolled and fajitas grilled only when an order comes in, the service time can be as long as 12 minutes. Burger and french-fry orders, on the other hand, go out in half the



Relying on fresh ingredients can lead to lower food costs, but higher labor costs.

time. When a party chooses items from each category, the staff is hard put to complete both parts of the order at the same time. Eventually, Goode Company plans to split off the Mexican items, with their longer service times, as the core menu for a fullservice Mexican restaurant.

Birth of a concept

The green minivan, inscribed with the logo Focaccia Fiorentina, inches along in midday Manhattan traffic. Its mission: delivering focaccia sandwiches to a stylish corporate clientele that includes companies such as Calvin Klein, Tiffany & Co., and Morgan Stanley.

Until 18 months ago, neither the company nor the concept existed. Four young men who had become friends in a Swiss boarding school gravitated to New York to start a business together. Because two were from Tuscany and a third was from Milan, something related to Italian food seemed logical—but they were in a city already teeming with Italian restaurants. "Then we noticed there weren't many places to get consistently good focaccia, and usually it was served hot, as part of a bread basket," says partner Leon Bushara.

The partners decided instead to sell focaccia sandwiches filled with meat, cheeses and vegetables, like those they had enjoyed together in Tuscany. Because investment capital totaled less than $10,000, they decided that the operation would be limited to catering and delivery.

A Florentine baker supplied a focaccia recipe and the name of a Manhattan baker to execute it. After numerous tests, the bread passed muster. "Focaccia is just flour, water, olive oil and a little rosemary, but the timing must be just right to get the outside hard and the inside soft," says Tommaso Buti, another partner. Flip-

Other operations come closer to the service times clocked by major quickservice chains. The Athens Marketplace Cafe restaurants complete orders in 1½ to 3 minutes. Although salads and other items are made to order, ingredients are placed in cold pans for fast assembly.

Spreading the freshness gospel

Goode Company trusts word of mouth and customers' taste buds more than formal marketing. "Just make sure you're doing it right consistently and people will know," says McCarley. The menu tells customers that everything is made in-house, but procedures are not described in detail unless a customer asks.

Displays in Athens Marketplace Cafe units intermingle items made in the processing plant with related retail items. Besides generating extra revenue, the bread, phyllo dough, bottles of olives and cans of anchovies remind customers that the concept uses the finest ingredients.

Also on view are five to seven menu items, which add visual interest and show customers what unfamiliar items look like. "It really stimulates sales," says Boat. "We're located in mall food courts, and the displays catch people's eyes as they walk by." The policy of offering a taste of any item often clinches the sale.

Small hearts beside each item on Bless Your Heart's menu tell customers that these low-calorie, low-fat foods are good for them. A full breakdown of calories, fat, cholesterol and sodium is printed for each item. Table tents for items such as frozen desserts explain how Bless Your Heart products differ nutritionally from other brands. Other handouts convey general health information. For example, there is one handout on sugar and another one on recommended exercise programs.

Owner Steve Plummer plans a program that will help customers even more in putting together a healthful meal. A menu board will suggest a menu for each daypart, geared to two levels of consumption: a meal plan for customers maintaining weight and a meal plan for those who are reducing.

Fine-tuning the concept

With a winning concept in place, together with systems for preparing fresh food and serving it fast, the next step for these operations is maintaining profitability.

Some companies move toward a limited menu, weeding out items that are too time-consuming or that fail to produce many orders. Bless Your Heart found that Texas customers familiar with pinto beans did not take to black beans. On the children's menu, Plummer plans to replace the hot dog with a turkey and cheese melt—a smart purchasing move, because there are several other turkey items on the menu.

Souvlaki does not appear on the Athens Marketplace Cafe menu because the meat's cost and the labor required to trim it are prohibitive.

Goode Company buys its ketchup, mustard and mayonnaise from suppliers, says McCarley, because the taste difference between house-made and commercially made is so small. "You can buy a pretty good mayonnaise and add spices to get the flavor you want," says McCarley.

Some of these make-it-fresh companies plan to expand. Greek Specialties Corp. wants to design small Greek kiosks, perhaps in cooperation with a contract management company, for airports, amusement parks and other settings. Management is also looking at mail order of retail products as a possible profit center.

By butchering its own meat, Goode Company can guarantee that the beef in a lunchtime burger was ground just that morning.

Following the wildfire success of the first Bless Your Heart restaurants, Plummer sold five franchises. The three in Texas are still functioning, but stores in Florida and California have closed. He concedes that the company expanded too quickly to maintain strict quality control in far-flung locations. He also discovered that fast-paced expansion might not lead to personal satisfaction: "I've been so busy opening restaurants and putting out fires that there hasn't been much time to do what I like best—developing creative new menu items."

Like the other entrepreneurs profiled here, Plummer will have to gauge carefully how big his company can grow without jeopardizing the focus on fresh fast food. ❑

Toni Lydecker is a writer in Irvington, New York.

ping the bread to make both sides crisp, they found, prevented fillings from turning the sandwiches soggy.

At 6 a.m. on a cold February morning, the partners stood ready with their freshly printed menus at Fifth Avenue and 57th Street. Despite New York's reputation as the city that never sleeps, hardly anyone was around at that hour.

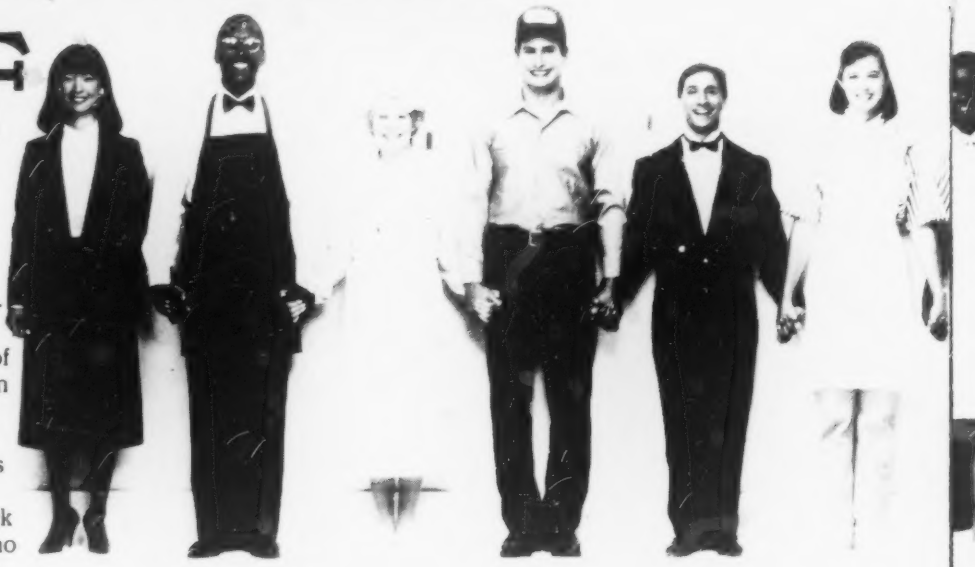
Eventually some passersby took the menus and then, says Bushara, "just to show how little we knew, we came back and waited for the phone to ring. We had bought all the food, but nothing was prepared." They were so elated when the phone rang that one partner cut himself, but panic set in after the third call came while they were still working on the first order.

The next day the partners hired three workers and began the hard work of mastering the restaurant business. A traditional filling of peas and creamy cheese, popular in Italy, left New Yorkers cold. But customers loved the Tirolese, a combination of bresaola (a cured beef), provolone, arugula, lemon and extra-virgin olive oil. Slowly, the mailing list began to read like a Who's Who of fashion houses, banks and publishers, and the operation added a fax machine to send menus and receive orders. Delivery times that were at first unpredictable were pushed down to 25 minutes or less.

Most of all, says Bushara, "We were lucky. Our customers stuck with us while we organized ourselves." What's next for Focaccia Fiorentina? A small cafe and takeout operation.

MANAGING A MULTIETHNIC STAFF

by Gary M. Stern



Walking into the kitchen of the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza in the heart of midtown Manhattan is like entering the United Nations' General Assembly. A variety of languages are heard, and many nations are represented.

The kitchen staff, says chef Patrick Augustyn, consists of employees who are Russian, French, British, Colombian, Korean and Jamaican. But how can Augustyn turn these employees—some of whom speak excellent English and some who speak only broken English—into a team that can turn out quality food promptly? And how can chefs and managers across the United States be sensitive to the ever-increasing number of restaurant employees who hail from ethnic backgrounds?

Managing such a multiethnic staff can be quite a challenge. Working in a kitchen where time is of the essence, the chef, manager, kitchen staff and front of the house all must work together as a team. To the manager or chef who says that he doesn't have time to understand cultural differences, consultant Osceola Edmondson says, "You can't afford not to consider cultural differences. The results pay off in added productivity." Edmondson teaches a class called "Managing Diversity" and heads the Common Sense Consulting Company in Columbia, Maryland.

Most restaurant managers, notes Edmondson, will say that they treat all their staff the same. That's the problem, he suggests. "Managing diversity is treating everyone differently," says Edmondson.

Cultural differences exhibit themselves in behavior in the workplace. For example, says Edmondson, when a chef tells a Korean prep person who recently joined the staff to cut lettuce for the salad, and the Korean nods, the chef will presume that the employee knows exactly what he is doing. But nodding in the Korean culture, says Edmondson, means "I hear what you say." It does not necessarily mean, "I understand how to do what you ask."

Edmondson also points out that when an Iranian kitchen staff member communicates within two inches of a chef's or manager's nose, he is not in any way trying to show disrespect. That's the physical space that the Iranian culture prefers when communicating.

Chef Patrick Augustyn of the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza says that making an effort to know each employee individually is a sure way to cut through problems of diversity. "Whose wife is sick? Who celebrates Christmas when? If you know that certain reports in the news affect their nationality, then talk to them about it," says Augustyn. Your staff is going to make or break you, so understanding each member of the staff is time productively spent.

Facing the language problem

One major issue in managing a multiethnic crew is a staff's difficulties with the English language, says Stephan Pyles, co-owner of the Routh Street Cafe in Dallas. When the staff doesn't speak a common language, the kitchen's speed may be diminished, he says. Breakdowns can occur, and the kitchen's ability to get dishes out on time can falter. He has learned what restaurateurs call "kitchen Spanish" to help improve the flow in the back of the house.

Communication is "one of the first barriers that an organization has to overcome if they select people who don't know the language," says hospitality industry consultant Toni Chance of Chance Bateman Inc. in Hampton, New Hampshire. One way to prevent immigrant employees from feeling

isolated is for the restaurant to provide in-house or contracted English lessons, says Chance.

Although language differences can cause problems in a restaurant, most of the time conflicts arise from "culture barriers," says restaurant consultant Walter Staib of Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. Having worked in a restaurant with several Jamaicans, Staib came to learn that culturally they were very proud and hard-working people. But if a manager reprimanded a Jamaican in front of his peers, the employee felt a greater level of humiliation than is ordinarily the case. Staib learned quickly that if he had any constructive criticism to offer one of his Jamaican staff members, he spoke to the person in private.

A healthy work ethic and restaurant environment can promote acceptance of different cultures in an operation, says Routh Street Cafe's Stephan Pyles. Pyles explains that the overriding mission of the restaurant transcends cultural differences. "If you work at Routh Street, you learn that we are striving to present the highest-quality food. That goes for everyone, including prep cooks who don't speak English. Everything that they're chopping has to be the same size. We don't allow any bad leaves on salad greens. These things are instilled from day one, and they have nothing to do with color or culture."

Consultant Toni Chance adds that a restaurant's work environment can determine whether ethnic and cultural differences are accepted or whether they lead to conflict. Having an environment in which differences can be discussed rather than suppressed leads to a positive atmosphere.

Restaurants that have problems with cultural differences, Chance suggests, "usually have other issues involved which may or may not be obvious." Often the issue may be recognition. Each person's role in the restaurant—washing dishes, prepping food, serving food, cleaning off tables—serves as a vital component of the whole, and each worker deserves individual recognition.

Racism and discrimination can be problems in any work situation in any country, and these problems can filter into the restaurant. Pyles acknowledges that the owner can set the tone for creating an environment where racism and bias will not be tolerated anywhere in the restaurant. Pyles says that when intolerance has been exhibited, he "lets the person know in no uncertain terms that it won't be permitted from anyone." Waiters are discouraged from showing insensitivity to staff members in the back of the house and vice versa.

The chef's role

The chef, too, can play a major role in determining whether cultural differences are accepted or scorned. "Just the way he relays information to his staff plays a major role," says Staib. Avoiding preferential treatment on assigning shifts and avoiding different rules for members of different nationalities can lead to an equitable restaurant environment.

Chefs who have succeeded in molding a team out of staff members from many nationalities usually operate like a "coach rather than an executive dictator," says consultant Toni Chance. Coaches can be tough and demanding, and they expect results, but they recognize that only when the

team plays together will the kitchen succeed.

One way to achieve teamwork, she says, is for the chef to explain to each person what his or her tasks, objectives and goals are, both individually and collectively. Instead of screaming at an individual for breaking a glass, Chance suggests that at a meeting the chef can explain how much money was lost last month because of glass breakage. Eliciting ideas from the

Tips on handling a multiethnic staff

☐ If you have employees who don't speak English, place a sign above the dishwasher with 20 or 30 useful English words.

☐ Around holiday time, expect that many immigrants may react to being separated from their families.

☐ Discover what makes each worker tick, what motivates each employee, what makes each one distinctive.

☐ Put yourself in the shoes of any employee with whom you are dealing. How would you feel if you were being reprimanded in front of your peers by the boss?

☐ One surefire incentive for many immigrants remains economics. Bonuses, increased sales and gratuity sharing make a strong impact on all people, including people of foreign heritage.

☐ Offer information to immigrants pertinent to their lives outside of the workplace—daycare help, counseling, medical care.

☐ Seize every opportunity to raise an employee's self-esteem and grant recognition for a job well-done.

☐ Be honest with employees. If a busboy who does not speak English well wants to become a waiter, let him know that he must first improve his English skills.

☐ Try a "culture day" once a month, where employees bring in dishes from their native culture and describe their culture.

☐ View diversity as a strength, not a drawback.

☐ Borrow an idea from corporations called "mentoring," which matches an experienced employee of one ethnic group with a novice from the same ethnic group.

staff, too, can create more involvement and participation from all members. Once people begin to see that they can communicate, teamwork is easier to achieve.

To reach a multiethnic staff, it helps to see things from the employee's viewpoint. Loret Carbone, vice president of human resources at the Chicago-based Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises restaurants, says that many of the Hispanic staff members who work in the company's restaurants have been doctors, businesspeople or teachers in their native country.

To sensitize managers to the life of immigrants, part of a manager's training at Lettuce Entertain You includes a showing of the film "El Norte," which concerns a Hispanic immigrant adjusting to life in the United States. Managers are told that many immigrants send a portion of their checks back home to care for their families.

Understand the employee's culture

When Carbone was first named manager of a restaurant, she too faced the impact of cultural differences. Carbone says that foreign-born staff members were sometimes reluctant to carry out her orders because in their country women had rarely assumed leadership positions. Carbone had to discuss with the employees individually the fact that she was the boss and that if they didn't follow her instructions, there would be consequences.

When conflicts arise, they must be settled equitably. One consultant remembers seeing a flare-up between a line cook and a foreign prep person. When the manager entered the kitchen and saw the altercation, he immediately accused the prep person of instigating it. It turned out that the line cook had initiated the conflict. A manager must objectively investigate the facts and make sure that all parties share responsibility.

Why are some people resistant to multiethnic staffs? Lee Gardenswartz, a Southern California management consultant whose company focuses on cultural diversity, says "human beings are resistant to change, are afraid of it, and prefer the status quo. Cultural diversity shakes up the status quo and is threatening." Her program encourages people to understand cultural differences in people.

Supporting one's staff is another way to ensure respect. Loret Carbone says that at times patrons have insulted Hispanic employees. "If they [the patrons who made the remarks] don't back down, they're asked to leave. We're 100 percent behind our employees," she says.

How management treats its employees, suggests Salvador Rivera, president of the Los Angeles-based Jobs for Progress, a manpower training program, will determine the loyalty of its employees. "Seek their advice as to how you can deal with them. They know where they are hurting and what the cultural differences are. We encourage people to talk to the individuals to try to get them to tell you how they would do the work," he says. While restaurants are usually focused on the customer, management must always be aware of the needs of the employees, as well. Most restaurant employees from foreign countries want to "fit in, build loyalty, be accepted, be good workers and do what managers want them to do," Rivera says.

Most restaurants have similar goals: to have a restaurant and kitchen with minimal conflicts based on ethnic differences. Back at New York's Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, chef Augustyn is conferring with a Colombian employee, asking about his wife's health, making sure a Jamaican employee receives his performance appraisal and considering a Korean employee for a promotion. He spends considerable time in the kitchen, knowing that an attentive chef can ensure that all staff is treated fairly. And he never loses sight of his goal: to turn his multiethnic kitchen staff into a team. ❑

Gary Stern is a writer in New York City.

Managing Hispanic employees

What special techniques can owners and managers employ to heighten their effectiveness with Hispanic employees?

Salvador Rivera, president of Jobs for Progress, a Los Angeles-based, nonprofit organization that specializes in employment and training programs, says that the most critical element in working with Hispanics is showing them "courtesy and respect." Most Hispanic traditions stress these characteristics. If the manager treats Hispanic employees with courtesy and respect, the odds are much stronger that he or she can reach them and gain their respect.

Pride also plays a major role in the psychology of Hispanics (as it does for almost everyone). To maintain employee pride, Rivera suggests that when a restaurant manager gives directions to a Hispanic employee, the manager should be especially careful not to demean, degrade or humiliate him and thereby injure his pride. He encourages managers to explain to Hispanic employees how their roles fit into the restaurant's success.

If the manager sees that the Hispanic employee has some language difficulties, the manager should take extra time to ensure that instructions are understood and adhered to. But Rivera stresses that "because this person doesn't command the language doesn't mean they can't command the job."

One of the worst mistakes a manager can make, suggests consultant Osceola Edmondson, is mocking a Hispanic person's accent or ridiculing someone who makes a language miscue.

Learn as much as you can about each specific Hispanic nationality. Don't expect that all Salvadorans, Argentinians and Mexicans will display the same characteristics.

#117

The credo of the good employee

The first job I ever had was washing dishes in a cafeteria when I was 14 years old. I had a rough, tough and gruff supervisor who had a heart of gold and who told me on the first day that if I ever wanted to be a good employer, the first step was to be a darn good employee. I have always felt that this was good advice (in the same vein as "if you want to be a good leader, you start by being a good follower"), and I've never forgotten it.

Moreover, I've given considerable thought to the qualities, values, personal standards and characteristics of people I have encountered over the years whom I consider to be "darn good employees." I have also developed a creed, so to speak, that addresses this topic, and for what it's worth, I'll share it with you.

The credo of the good employee

1. As I have accepted this position, I will become the very best employee my employer has ever hired for this position.

2. I will exhibit a cheerful "can do" attitude at all times, as evidenced by a genuine smile when interacting with others.

3. I will be at my appointed place at the appointed time, dressed and groomed appropriately, ready to work.

4. I will read carefully the information given to me relating to my position and to the organization.

5. I will ask questions about matters of which I am not sure, speaking clearly and listening intently.

6. I understand that the better I perform my assignment, the easier it will be for me and my coworkers and the more successful the organization will become, which in turn is beneficial to me.

7. I will demonstrate an improvement attitude, seeking, in consultation with my supervisor(s), to make things with which I am concerned operate more efficiently and effectively.

8. I will never raise my voice in anger, nor will I ever become physically or mentally abusive to people or property.

9. I realize that the better I perform in my position, the greater the service I can provide to others—which underscores my belief in a strong work ethic and a strong service ethic.

10. I will volunteer for new or additional work assignments to give evidence of my desire to learn and to accept greater responsibility.

11. I will be loyal to my employer in words and deeds, with everyone with whom I come in contact.

12. I understand that in the long run it is the customers we satisfy who pay my wages.

13. I will be knowledgeable about the standards set forth by my employer with respect to my position, and I will meet or exceed them at all times.

14. I will be honest and forthright in my relationships with all with whom I come into contact.

15. When new employees are assigned to me for training, I will teach them the attitude, knowledge and skills at the highest level at which I am capable, to ensure their success in their assignment(s).

Fisher's Law #117 (attributed to and in memory of Al): If you aspire to be a good employer, you need first to be a good employee.

You can't catch AIDS from food or social contact. According to the experts at the Centers for Disease Control, that is a fact your employees ought to know.

Have you prepared your staff for the illness of a fellow worker?

To help ward off panic and the rumors it may breed, the National Restaurant Association has produced a pair of videotapes entitled ***The AIDS Issue***.

The first tape prepares management for the problems arising when an employee contracts AIDS. The second tape tells employees how AIDS is contracted. It makes it clear that the foodservice workplace is safe in this regard, but warns them how to protect their health during non-working hours.

Also available is ***Basic Facts about AIDS for Foodservice Employees***, an 8-page pamphlet designed to calm unnecessary fear.

To order, call the Publications department at the National Restaurant Association (800) 424-5156

The AIDS Issue: MG900
$32.95 for members
$36.25 for nonmembers

Basic Facts about AIDS: PB010
$1.25 for members
$1.65 for nonmembers

Children strongly influence dining-out decisions

A new National Restaurant Association publication, The Market for Children and Family Dining, *reveals that half of parents rate their preteen children as influential in the decision to dine at a tableservice restaurant.*

More mothers are going out to eat with their children now than were 14 years ago, according to a *Good Housekeeping/* Roper survey. In 1990, nearly three-fourths (72 percent) of mothers surveyed said they often go out to eat with their children. This compares to a much lower 54 percent in 1976.

Foodservice establishments have become a lifestyle necessity for today's busy families. The presence of children in a household modifies a consumer's dining-out behavior, but how does this affect restaurant spending?

A new association publication, *The Market for Children and Family Dining,* contains practical information on families and children, ranging from population projections and household-composition data to studies conducted specifically for the National Restaurant Association.

Highlights of the report

□ *Children are influential in decision to eat out.* An association Gallup study reveals that half of parents surveyed in 1990 reported their children under 13 as being "very influential" or "somewhat influential" in the decision to eat out at a tableservice restaurant. Moreover, children were likely to influence the selection of a specific tableservice restaurant.

□ *Children and families capture large portion of total spending on food away from home.* In 1989, households with children represented 43 percent of all spending on food away from home, although they composed a lower 35 percent of all households, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' *Consumer Expenditure Survey.*

□ *Number of births reached record high.* In 1989 the number of births exceeded 4 million for the first time since 1964, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. Moreover, this pace was maintained through 1990. Restaurateurs may be seeing more young customers in the next few years.

□ *More emphasis on quickservice and off-premises eating.* According to a special association CREST* study, there was a greater emphasis on eating at quickservice restaurants in households with children under 13—especially at pizza, hamburger, Mexican, and ice cream restaurants—than in households with no preteen children. Also, more than half (54 percent) of all restaurant orders were for off-premises eating in households with preteen children, compared with 40 percent in households without preteen children.

□ *Favorite menu items.* The association Gallup study showed that adults named hamburgers as their child's favorite menu item. About 42 percent of adults with children less than six years of age, and 45 percent of adults with children six to 12 years old did so. French fries, chicken and pizza also ranked high.

□ *Favorite restaurant services for children.* According to the association Gallup study, parents cited providing children's favorite food items, providing quick service and offering child-size portions as the most important services that tableservice restaurants can offer for children less than 13 years old.

—*Elizabeth Gordon*

**CREST stands for* Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, *a diary survey of one of the NPD marketing and research companies.*

How adults rate children's influence in the decision to dine at a tableservice restaurant

At least half of parents rated their preteen children as influential in the decision to dine out at a tableservice restaurant

"How influential is/are your child/children in the decision to eat out?"

Influence according to adults	Influence of children less than 6 years of age	Influence of children 6 to 12 years of age
5—very influential	35%	32%
4	13	23
3	21	27
2	8	8
1—not at all influential	23	10
Total	100%	100%

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup survey, 1990

How to order the report

Copies of *The Market for Children and Family Dining* (CS680) are available to association members for $25 and to nonmembers for $50. This includes shipping and handling charges. (Overseas orders require a 20 percent surcharge.) All orders must be prepaid.

You may order by sending a check or money order to the National Restaurant Association Publications Department, 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington DC 20036-3097. For credit-card orders, call the association's information service and library between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Eastern Time) at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960.

New compensation study for salaried personnel in foodservice

A new National Restaurant Association study, Compensation for Salaried Personnel in Foodservice, *offers insight into the compensation practices and policies of foodservice organizations.*

A wealth of compensation information for more than 30 executive and salaried positions in foodservice is now available, based on a member survey conducted by the association in late 1990. Data was compiled in cooperation with the Hay Group, a compensation consulting firm.

Company-furnished meals were the perk most frequently offered to salaried employees.

Median base salary and median bonus data are presented for each position, together with upper and lower quartile figures. Compensation and bonus information for every position is available. This information is broken down by a variety of parameters, such as type of restaurant, scope of operation and sales volume. In addition, information on industry perquisites, leave policies and benefits programs changes are also presented in the report.

A total of 1,305 surveys were used to produce the report. These respondents represented 12,708 units and employed more than 37,000 salaried workers.

The typical survey participant:

- was a privately owned corporation
- operated locally
- reported annual sales of $900,000
- employed fewer than five salaried workers
- and was a full-menu tableservice operation.

Study highlights

Median annual base salaries ranged from $95,000 for the position of chairman of the board to $18,200 for night manager. Median annual bonuses ranged from $27,500 for chairman of the board to $1,041 for assistant unit manager.

An organization's scope of operation and sales volume were important factors in determining compensation levels. For example, the median annual base salary for the position of vice president of operations was $40,000 for organizations operating on a local basis,

Compensation for salaried personnel

Position	Total number of positions reporting	Median annual base salary	Total number of positions reporting	Median annual bonus*
Owner	757	$38,000	335	$15,000
Chairman of the board	36	95,000	18	27,500
President	304	47,500	122	15,750
Chief executive officer	105	46,000	54	10,000
Chief financial officer	78	48,000	36	10,000
Chief operating officer	95	50,000	52	6,000
Treasurer	109	28,000	40	6,000
Vice president				
General	30	40,000	15	8,875
Development/Real estate	26	67,182	15	15,500
Distribution/Purchasing	33	46,000	15	7,200
Finance	31	60,000	15	19,000
Franchising	14	76,875	8	10,746
Management information systems	21	56,500	10	8,783
Marketing	58	44,200	29	6,500
Operations	162	50,000	77	10,000
Personnel/Human resources	54	42,000	22	6,000
Other function	43	46,680	25	10,000
Controller	228	30,000	100	3,000
Training director	57	30,500	30	3,000
Food and beverage director	305	32,736	111	2,500
Executive chef	483	31,000	216	2,050
Banquet manager	180	23,250	54	2,000
Catering manager	157	24,000	69	3,000
Unit manager	8,764	25,740	6,852	2,500
Assistant unit manager	11,873	21,600	9,378	1,041
Night manager	317	18,200	155	1,121
Manager trainee	2,017	18,600	69	2,000
Dining room manager	895	20,425	565	1,305
Kitchen manager	970	22,000	390	1,700
Regional manager	508	50,200	466	6,800
District manager	887	42,000	840	4,817

**For positions reporting annual bonus*

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Compensation for Salaried Personnel in Foodservice*, 1991

compared with $89,632 for organizations operating on a national basis. For foodservice operations with an annual sales volume of less than $1 million, the median base salary was $21,000 for a vice president of operations. That median salary compared with $72,500 for organizations with an annual sales volume of $10 million or more.

Company-furnished meals were the perquisite most frequently offered to salaried employees. More than half of survey respondents indicated that their company provided meals free of charge, and an additional 12 percent of survey participants noted that their company paid partially for meals. Other popular perquisites included health and accident insurance, major medical insurance and professional seminars.

Participants in the survey were asked to indicate any significant changes to their benefits programs in the past year and any changes anticipated within the next two years. Among those respondents reporting changes in the last year, improved medical coverage was the most frequently cited. Establishing a 401(k) plan was the most frequently mentioned change in benefits programs expected within the next two years.

—Hudson Riehle

The top five changes in benefits programs

Changes made in 1990:

- ☐ Improved medical coverage
- ☐ Increased employee share of benefits costs
- ☐ Instituted profit-sharing
- ☐ Improved group life/health insurance
- ☐ Offered longer vacations

Changes planned for the next two years:

- ☐ Establish a 401(k) plan
- ☐ Improve health insurance
- ☐ Provide profit-sharing
- ☐ Increase employees' share of benefits costs
- ☐ Institute a pension plan

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Compensation for Salaried Personnel in Foodservice*, 1991.

How to order the complete report

The association's *Compensation for Salaried Personnel in Foodservice* (publication CS160) will be available this month to association members for $30 and to nonmembers for $60. This includes shipping and handling charges. (Overseas orders require a 20 percent surcharge.) All orders must be prepaid.

You may order by sending a check or money order to the National Restaurant Association Publications Department, 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington DC 20036-3097. For credit-card orders, call the association's information service and library between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Eastern Time) at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960.

Patrons dine differently while on vacation

With the peak vacation travel season rapidly approaching, restaurants that benefit from tourists or travelers should be aware that people dine differently while on vacation. A new National Restaurant Association CREST special study of vacation dining in 1990 reveals the differences.

Tourists can be a restaurateur's dream: a set of customers with money budgeted for dining out and no option of cooking at home. But restaurateurs should note that eating-out patterns for people on vacation are sometimes radically different from when they are not on vacation. A National Restaurant Association CREST special study reveals that customers tend to visit different types of restaurants while on vacation. These visits vary not only among age groups but also by the season during which the vacation was taken.

Why should restaurateurs try to gain an edge by attracting travelers? First, according to a 1989 study by Louis Harris and Associates for *Travel & Leisure* magazine, approximately 41.3 million households took a trip for vacation or mainly personal reasons in 1988. In addition, the survey found that about seven out of 10 traveling Americans took more than one trip in 1988 for personal pleasure.

Where do people eat on vacation?

Vacation travel brings about changes in the distribution of restaurant traffic among segments. Customers on vacation are more likely than usual to patronize midscale and upscale establishments, and they are less likely to patronize quickservice restaurants.

According to the association's CREST special study, 53 percent of all 1990 vacation restaurant traffic was at quickservice restaurants, with an additional 32 percent of traffic going to midscale, and the remaining 14 percent going to upscale. Within the upscale segment, moderate-check establishments captured 59 percent and higher-check eateries logged 41 percent of traffic.

This is substantially different from the distribution of non-vacation restaurant traffic. Quickservice establishments captured a larger 69 percent of non-vacation traffic, while midscale restaurants garnered a lower 23 percent, and upscale restaurants tallied 8 percent of traffic. Of all upscale restaurant traffic, moderate check restaurants accounted for 80 percent of traffic and higher-check restaurants accounted for 20 percent.

However, these proportions vary greatly by season. In the summer of 1990, quickservice restaurants accounted for 58.8 percent of vacation restaurant traffic. That share declined to 46.5 percent in the fall. Conversely, midscale restaurants accounted for 36.3 percent of vacation restaurant traffic in the fall but

Breakdown of restaurant traffic by segment among patrons on vacation versus patrons not on vacation, 1990

Diners of all ages had a higher proportion of visits to midscale and upscale restaurants while on vacation

Age	Percent of total traffic: On vacation	Percent of total traffic: Not on vacation	Percentage point difference
Less than 18 years old			
Quickservice	68.3%	83.7%	−15.4
Midscale	22.8	12.7	+10.1
Upscale	8.8	3.6	+ 5.2
18 to 34 years old			
Quickservice	61.6%	76.3%	−14.7
Midscale	25.3	16.3	+ 9.0
Upscale	13.1	7.3	+ 5.8
35 to 49 years old			
Quickservice	55.8%	70.5%	−14.7
Midscale	28.8	21.0	+ 7.8
Upscale	15.4	8.5	+ 6.9
50 to 64 years old			
Quickservice	41.4%	56.2%	−14.8
Midscale	41.5	33.3	+ 8.2
Upscale	17.1	10.5	+ 6.6
65 years old and older			
Quickservice	39.3%	48.5%	− 9.2
Midscale	46.6	41.7	+ 4.9
Upscale	14.1	9.8	+ 4.3

Note: *Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.*
Source: National Restaurant Association CREST special study, 1991; NPD/CREST Annual Household Report, 1990; National Restaurant Association

Will recession affect travel?

A recent survey of 200 households indicates that the recession may have an impact on the demand for travel. The survey, conducted by D.K. Shifflet and Associates (DKS&A) between March 9 and March 19, 1991, found that 76 percent of households surveyed had a member who was planning to travel within the next six months (that is, by September). Just a month earlier, only 51 percent of households surveyed responded in a similar fashion.

Despite the increase in travel plans, travelers are likely to be more price conscious in the coming months. About 40 percent of households surveyed responded that the cost of travel most affects their travel plans. An additional 26 percent stated that their travel plans were most affected by the current economy.

Although cost will be an issue for many travelers, this does not mean that all business sectors that benefit from travel will be equally affected. DKS&A's January survey indicated that travelers were expecting to cut back on certain expenditures in the first half of 1991. Compared with the first half of 1990, 19 percent more households surveyed expected to take more short leisure trips in place of long ones in the first half of 1991. Similarly, 19 percent more households expected to trade down from airline to automobile travel. About 18 percent more planned to look for special lodging offers, and 16 percent more were planning to stay with friends or relatives rather than hotels while vacationing.

There was no increase in the proportion of households that expected to spend less on food while away from home. This is good news for restaurateurs who benefit from travelers. A good restaurant meal may still be considered an "essential" during travel, rather than a discretionary luxury.

Source: D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd., National Restaurant Association

only 29.4 percent of traffic in the summer. Upscale restaurants experienced similar seasonal shifts (see chart).

Part of this change in distribution in eater occasions by season may be accounted for by shifts in the age of eaters. In the summer quarter of 1990, diners less than 18 years old (with whom quickservice restaurants tend to be popular), accounted for 26.3 percent of vacation restaurant traffic. Yet in the fall, this group of young people accounted for only 12.3 percent of vacation restaurant traffic. Conversely, adults between 50 and 64 years of age (who tend to patronize midscale and upscale establishments) accounted for 28.1 percent of vacation restaurant traffic in the fall and only 18.6 percent of restaurant traffic in the summer (see chart).

Breakfast is bigger on vacation

Among the three major meal periods, breakfast/morning snacks captured 19.8 percent of vacation restaurant traffic—a substantially higher proportion than the 11.1 percent for non-vacation traffic. Lunch and supper traffic accounted for a smaller proportion of on-vacation traffic than non-vacation traffic (see chart next page).

Analysis of meal-period vacation traffic by segment also reveals profound differences. For example, at quickservice restaurants both breakfast and lunch captured a greater share of traffic among those on vacation. Supper, which accounted for 40.4 percent of non-vacation traffic at quickservice restaurants in 1990, accounted for only 28.5 percent of vacation traffic. Lunch captured the

largest share of vacation traffic at quickservice restaurants.

Midscale restaurants showed a similar distribution of traffic among meal periods. In this segment, breakfast traffic accounted for 31.7 percent of total traffic among those on vacation, but only 16.6 percent of non-vacation traffic. Both lunch and supper accounted for smaller proportions of restaurant traffic at midscale restaurants among people on vacation.

Among moderate-check upscale restaurants, there was little shifting in meal-period traffic distribution when comparing vacation traffic to non-vacation traffic. The only meal period to see a decline in vacation share of traffic was lunch.

Fewer deals are used by patrons on vacation.

Perhaps the most dramatic change in meal-period traffic distribution occurred at higher-check upscale establishments. In this segment, breakfast/morning snacks accounted for 23.8 percent of vacation traffic, compared with only 11.2 percent of non-vacation traffic. Conversely, lunch accounted for a much smaller share of total vacation traffic at higher-check upscale establishments—14.9 percent compared with 27.3 percent of non-vacation traffic. Supper accounted for a slightly smaller portion of on-vacation than non-vacation traffic.

Breakdown of restaurant traffic by meal period among patrons on vacation versus patrons not on vacation, 1990

Within all segments, breakfast traffic is higher among patrons on vacation

Segment	Percent of total traffic: On vacation	Percent of total traffic: Not on vacation	Percentage point difference
Total industry			
Breakfast/AM snack	19.8%	11.1%	+ 8.7
Lunch	34.1	36.4	− 2.3
Supper	35.4	41.7	− 6.3
Quickservice			
Breakfast/AM snack	14.6%	10.0%	+ 4.6
Lunch	40.4	36.4	+ 4.0
Supper	28.5	40.4	−11.9
Midscale			
Breakfast/AM snack	31.7%	16.6%	+15.1
Lunch	29.5	38.1	− 8.6
Supper	34.4	38.6	− 4.2
Moderate check upscale			
Breakfast/AM snack	5.5%	3.7%	+ 1.8
Lunch	25.0	32.2	− 7.2
Supper	67.4	61.4	+ 6.0
Higher-check upscale			
Breakfast/AM snack	23.8%	11.2%	+12.6
Lunch	14.9	27.3	−12.4
Supper	56.2	56.9	− 0.7

Note: *Percentages may not add to 100 due to exclusion of afternoon and evening snack traffic.*
Source: National Restaurant Association CREST special study, 1991; NPD/CREST Annual Household Report, 1990; National Restaurant Association

The reasons for these shifts may be due to activities undertaken by travelers, as well as the fact that they usually do not have the option to eat at home. For example, one reason breakfast may be more important to patrons on vacation (in all segments) may be due to the fact that travelers may want a hearty breakfast before leaving for a full day of sightseeing. Lunch for travelers may be a "quick bite" on the way to another destination. Consequently, quickservice establishments may provide the sought-after convenience. For the evening meal, it is possible that vacationers want to sit down and relax following their full day. Thus, they opt for midscale or upscale establishments, rather than quickservice.

People on vacation spend more, use fewer deals

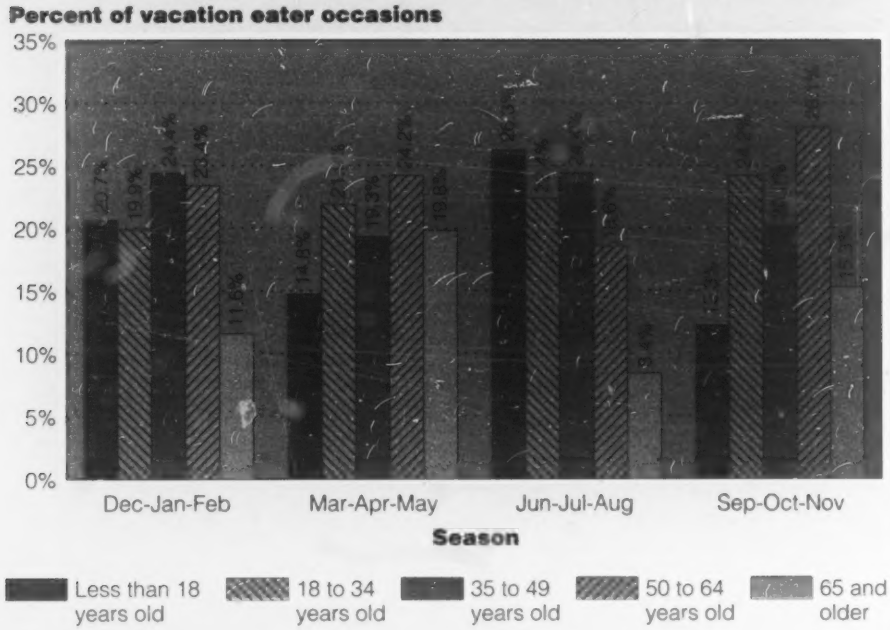
What should restaurateurs expect from diners on vacation? The average vacationer spends more for a meal. According to the association's CREST special study, the average eater check per person while on vacation in 1990 was $4.81. By comparison, the average check per eater for all restaurant visits in 1990 was a lower $3.88.

Average eater checks for quickservice, midscale and moderate-check upscale were all higher for people on vacation. At quickservice restaurants, the average 1990 eater check was $2.88, and the average eater check on vacation was $2.97. For midscale restaurants, checks averaged $4.73 per person for all visits, while the average check on vacation was a higher $5.22. Similarly, average checks at moderate-check upscale restaurants were higher while on vacation, compared with checks for all visits: $8.64 compared with $7.87.

On the other hand, aver-

Seasonal vacation restaurant traffic

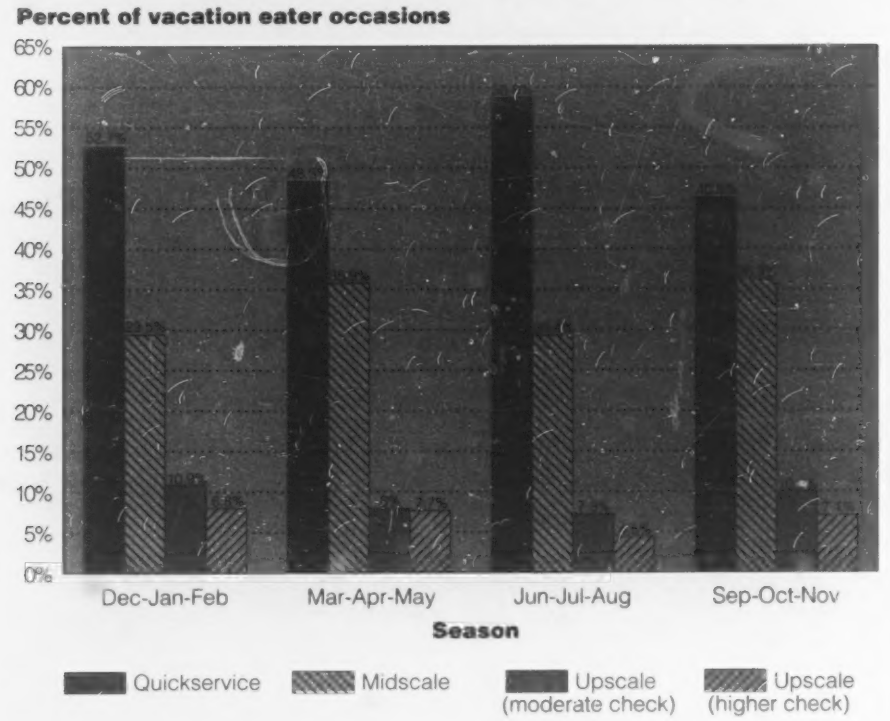
The age of vacation diners varies greatly by time of year



Source: National Restaurant Association CREST special study, 1991

Breakdown of vacation restaurant traffic by segment and season, 1990

Vacationers patronize quickservice at the highest rate during summer



Source: National Restaurant Association CREST special study, 1991

age eater checks at higher-check upscale restaurants were much lower when the diners were on vacation ($13.61 compared with $15.62). Part of this difference in eater checks may have to do with the fact that a substantially greater proportion of vacation visits to higher-check upscale restaurants are for breakfast, which tends to be a less expensive meal.

The difference in check size may be partially due to the fact that fewer deals are used on vacation. In 1990, the rate of deal use while on vacation was just over half of what it was for all restaurant visits. Deals were used on 10.9 percent of restaurant visits while on vacation but on a much higher 20.8 percent of all visits in 1990. Most notably, deals were used on only 11.4 percent of quickservice visits while on vacation, compared with 23.3 percent of all quickservice visits. Vacation deal use was also markedly lower for midscale (10.4 percent versus 16.2 percent) and moderate-check upscale (8.2 percent versus 15.3 percent) restaurants, when compared with use for all visits in 1990. In fact, the only industry segment for which vacation deal use was at normal use levels was at higher-check upscale restaurants—13.3 percent versus 13.4 percent.

The average vacationer spends more for a meal.

—Nancy Michalski

Spotlight on club restaurants

Food and beverage sales at clubs are projected to reach $2.3 billion in 1991, up 5.4 percent over last year (a 0.8 percent advance in real terms). Restaurant revenue growth at clubs, however, remained sluggish compared with other sources of club income, such as sporting activities and room rentals.*

Clubs, sporting camps and recreational camps are expected to post food and beverage sales of $2.3 billion in 1991, up 5.4 percent from $2.2 billion in 1990, according to the National Restaurant Association's *Foodservice Industry Forecast*. After adjusting for inflation, the gain is expected to be 0.8 percent in 1991, double the projected real gain for total eating and drinking places. According to association data, there were an estimated 10,310 clubs with foodservice in the United States in 1988.

Membership up

Pannell Kerr Forster's *Clubs in Town and Country 1990* reveals that membership at private clubs in the United States showed positive growth in 1990. Country clubs and city clubs each posted a 1 percent gain in the number of members. Country-club membership grew about 1 percent in the South and Far West, and growth was virtually flat in the East and Midwest. City-club membership, on the other hand, varied substantially by region. Club membership declined 1 percent in the Far West, increased a full 3 percent in the South and increased 1 percent in the Midwest and East.

Higher average check

As would be expected, full-menu tableservice restaurants in clubs exhibit some unique operating characteristics, according to the National Restaurant Association's *Restaurant Industry Operations Report '90*. In 1989, the median average check size in club restaurants was $13.08, which was higher than the $10.04 for all full-menu tableservice restaurants. Conversely, the median daily seat turnover was 0.5 in club restaurants, which was substantially lower than the turnover rate of 1.3 for all full-menu tableservice restaurants.

Club restaurants reported higher staffing levels than other types of full-menu tableservice restaurants. In 1989, a median of 42 employees worked at club restaurants, compared with a median 34 employees in full-menu tableservice restaurants. In club restaurants, 18 employees worked full-time, as did 16 part-time employees (20 to 35 hours per week) and 8 part-part-time employees (less than 20 hours per week). This compares to a lower 14 full-time workers, 12 part-time workers, and 8 part-part-time workers at all full-menu tableservice restaurants.

Higher compensation for employees

Not only did club restaurants have a larger number of employees, but the median pay for salaried employees was often higher than in other tableservice restaurants. For the first time, the National Restaurant Association's *Compensation for Salaried Personnel in Foodservice* provides data on wages and benefits for salaried employees and executives in club restaurants. According to survey results, executive chefs at club restaurants received a median base salary of $34,894 and a median bonus of $1,350 in 1990, compared with a median $31,000 salary and a median $2,050 bonus for respondents from all types of restaurants. The median base salary for club food and beverage directors was $31,000, along with $2,000 as a median bonus. These amounts are slightly lower than those reported for food and beverage directors in all restaurants ($32,736 and $2,500).

Club-restaurant unit managers received a median base salary of $28,000 and a median bonus of $3,000, compared with $25,740 and $2,500 for all restaurants. Similarly, the median payroll for banquet managers and catering managers ($25,000 and $26,200, respectively, excluding bonuses**) was about 10 percent higher in club restaurants than in other tableservice establishments ($23,250 and $24,000).

The association's *Restaurant Industry Operations Report '90* confirms that club restaurants reported a high ratio of payroll and benefit expenses to total sales, compared with other full-menu tableservice operators. In 1989, nearly half (48 percent) of total sales at club restaurants went toward payroll expenses, and an additional 10 percent went for employee benefits (see chart). In comparison, total full-menu tableservice restaurants posted a lower 28 percent of total sales for payroll expenses and 5 percent for employee benefits.

*Includes sporting and recreational camps

**Insufficient data for bonuses in clubs

Selected income and expenses for full-menu tableservice restaurants located in clubs,* 1989

Payroll and benefit expenses accounted for a large proportion of operating costs at club restaurants

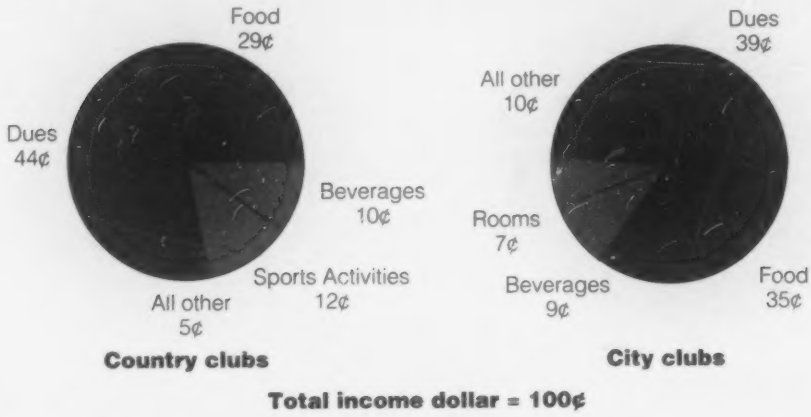
	Ratio to total sales**
Controllable expenses	
Payroll	48.1
Employee benefits	9.7
Direct operating expenses	9.2
Music and entertainment	1.7
Advertising and promotions	1.9
Utilities	4.8
Administrative and general	4.0
Repairs and maintenance	3.1
Occupation costs	
Rent	6.0
Property taxes	1.4
Other expenses	0.3
Property insurance	1.9

*Median values
**All ratios are listed as a percent of total sales

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report '90*

When the relatively lower daily seat turnover and the relatively higher payroll expenses are taken into account, it's not surprising that club restaurants recorded a modest loss of $27 per seat in 1989. However, most club restaurants operate to provide a service to members rather than for profit. With club membership dues supplementing food and beverage income, many clubs are willing to break even or take a slight loss on food and beverage sales.

City clubs showed a higher proportion of income from food sales than country clubs did



Source: Pannell Kerr Forster, *Clubs In Town & Country 1990*

The proportion of total club revenue per member from food and beverage sales has decreased steadily since 1980

	Country clubs		City clubs	
Year	**Total revenue**	**Food and beverage sales**	**Total revenue**	**Food and beverage sales**
1980	$1,974	$ 805	$1,089	$532
1981	2,215	897	1,217	595
1982	2,462	993	1,347	663
1983	2,654	1,059	1,435	690
1984	2,845	1,103	1,484	697
1985	3,027	1,157	1,586	728
1986	3,152	1,221	1,666	755
1987	3,345	1,273	1,720	763
1988	3,590	1,334	1,777	766
1989	3,735	1,417	1,847	804
1990	3,820	1,466	1,923	863

Source: Pannell Kerr Forster, *Clubs in Town and Country 1990*

Food and beverage

According to Pannell Kerr Forster's *Clubs in Town and Country 1990*, food and beverage sales represent a large portion of overall club revenues. In 1990, food sales at country clubs reached $1,092 per member and beverage sales $375, representing 38 percent of total club revenue. The Midwest showed the highest food and beverage sales per member ($1,381 for food and $569 for beverage), while the South captured the lowest sales per member ($983 for food and $294 for beverage). Nationally, the proportion of total income per member from food and beverage sales at country clubs has decreased slightly to a 38 percent share of total revenue in 1990 from a 41 percent share in 1980.

Similarly, in 1990 food and beverage sales at city club restaurants accounted for a 45 percent share of total revenue per member, down from a 49 percent share in 1980. In 1990, while the average amount spent per member was $681 for food and $181 for beverages, spending varied significantly by region. The South captured the highest amount spent on food per member ($925), the Midwest for beverage ($249), and the East showed the lowest spending on food and beverage ($613 for food, $167 for beverage).

A considerable amount of the revenue growth at club restaurants has been coming from areas such as club sporting activities and room rentals. For example, while food and beverage sales per member at country clubs advanced 27 percent between 1985 and 1990, and membership increased 21 percent, all other sources of income (primarily sports activities, rooms and minor-operated departments) surged 41 percent. At city clubs, between 1985 and 1990, food and beverage sales per member posted a 19 percent increase, compared with a 22 percent gain in membership dues and a 27 percent increase in other sources of income per member.

According to the National Club Association's *1989 Food and Beverage* study, the average price per meal was higher in yacht clubs ($14.86) and city clubs ($14.33) than in country and golf clubs ($11.89). Nearly all yacht clubs and country and golf clubs served dinner, as did nine in 10 city clubs. All clubs reported serving lunch. More city clubs served breakfast (70 percent) than did country and golf clubs (50 percent) or yacht clubs (25 percent). Of the clubs surveyed, eight in 10 used a service charge for daily meals, as did nine in 10 for party meals.

—*Elizabeth Gordon*

Foodservice Market Measure–February/March 1991

In March 1991, for the first time since October 1990, more than half of all adults were foodservice patrons on a typical day. Although data for an individual month do not make a trend, this is the first indication of an improvement for the industry in 1991. Still, it should be kept in mind that the Persian Gulf war ended in late February, and both St. Patrick's Day and Easter were celebrated in March.

Although patronage was below 50 percent from November 1990 through February 1991, 53 percent of adults were foodservice patrons in March 1991—a level similar to that of one year ago. Moreover, the improvement was widespread, occurring at all meal periods and for both on and off-premises consumption.

The increase in likelihood of patronage occurring between February and March 1991 is primarily attributed to significant gains among specific demographic groups:

- ☐ men
- ☐ 45 to 64-year-olds
- ☐ consumers with household incomes of $40,000 or more, and
- ☐ Midwesterners.

The proportion of adults who were on-premises patrons was 37 percent in March 1991, well above the 32 to 33 percent level from November to February, but slightly below the 39 percent who were on-premises patrons in March 1990. Off-premises patronage posted a gain as well, up from 17 percent in February to 23 percent in March 1991—higher that the 21 percent level in March 1990.

Looking at specific meal periods, the largest gainer from February to March 1991 was lunch. Although the proportion of adults who were lunch patrons in March 1991 was below that of the previous year's March, it is much improved from the winter months of 1990-91.

—Susan Mills

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day

Meal period	February 1991	March 1991	Percentage point change
Breakfast	5%	7%	+2
Lunch	23	27	+4
Dinner	22	25	+3
Snack	4	5	+1

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

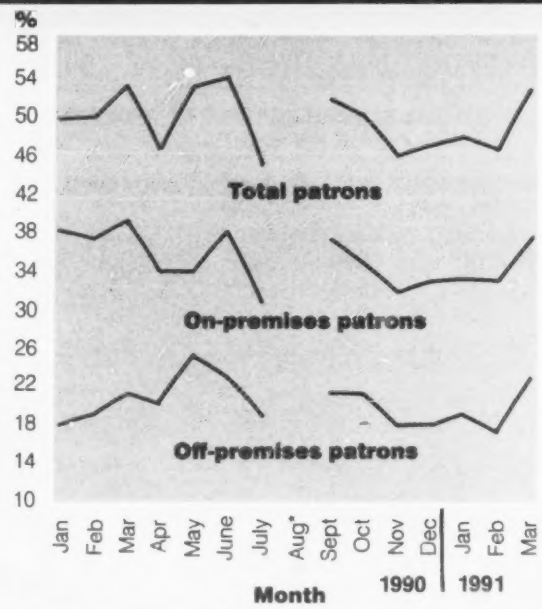
Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day

	February 1991	March 1991	Percentage point change
Male	46%	59%	+13*
Female	47	48	+1
Age			
18 to 24 years old	60	65	+5
25 to 34 years old	54	56	+2
35 to 44 years old	46	52	+6
45 to 54 years old	42	53	+11*
55 to 64 years old	40	55	+15*
65 years old and older	34	36	+2
Annual household income			
$40,000 or more	51	61	+10*
$20,000 to $39,999	44	52	+8
Less than $20,000	44	46	+2
Region			
East	49	55	+6
Midwest	42	54	+12*
South	48	54	+6
West	47	48	+1

*Significant difference

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons



*No Market Measure was fielded in August 1990.

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Foodservice Market Measure

The Foodservice Market Measure is based on 1,000 telephone interviews, conducted by the Gallup Organization each month, with a nationally representative sample of adults age 18 and older. Each person is asked the same questions:

1. Which of the following did you do yesterday?

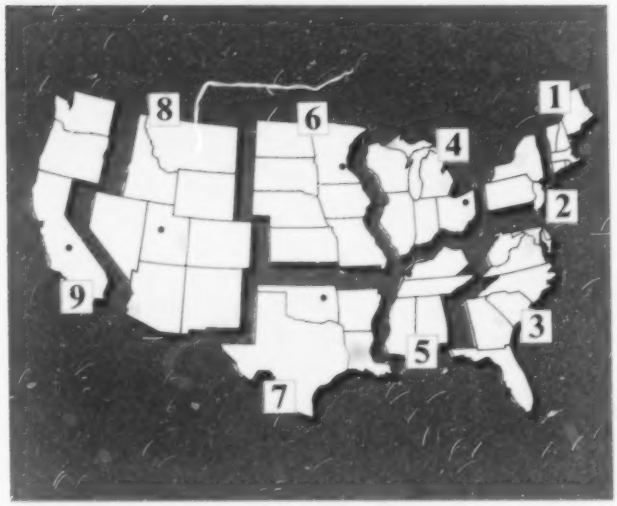
☐ Ate on the premises of a restaurant, fast food place, cafeteria or any other place where you purchased a meal or snack.

☐ Purchased takeout food "to go" or had it delivered.

2. Was the food you ate on premises yesterday for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

3. Was the takeout food you purchased or had delivered for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

The monthly tracking of purchases is supplemented by quarterly inquiries on topics of industry interest.



1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: Kennebunkport, ME
Association member: John Hughes III
Operation: Windows on the Water
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 6 years
Seats: 85
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Although business got off to a slow start in January, customer traffic has since increased at Windows on the Water, says owner **John Hughes III**. Customer counts at the restaurant were up 17 percent in February and 7 percent in March, but the check average is down about 6 percent. "It is good to see customer traffic up, but people are tending to their finances more closely, and that translates into fewer orders for desserts and alcohol," says Hughes.

Summer is fast approaching, bringing with it the hordes of travelers from around the world who descend on the quiet waterfront town. "The Fourth of July through October is our busiest season. I think we'll have a good season this year. People seem more confident about traveling and spending money than last summer," says Hughes. Are any of those summer diners likely to be Kennebunkport's most famous occasional resident? "We haven't fed the President yet, but we've fed everyone else in his family," says Hughes.

2 MID-ATLANTIC

Location: New York, NY
Association member: Thomas Birchard
Operation: Veselka
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 37 years
Seats: 80
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Business is up 15 percent compared to this time last year, says Veselka's owner **Thomas Birchard**. He has a theory about the reason for the increase: "We serve low-cost, homemade, simple meals, and I think more people are looking for that kind of place when they dine out during this economy," says Birchard.

The restaurant features Eastern European Polish/Ukrainian cuisine. Menu favorites include stuffed cabbages, cheese blintzes and homemade soups. Besides the food, the real draw for customers is the people-watching opportunity that a meal at Veselka offers. Located in Manhattan's East Village, the restaurant draws a diverse crowd of artists, struggling actresses and actors, punk rockers, tourists, uptown New Yorkers and families.

The interior has not changed much since 1954 and retains an old-world feel, complete with waitresses whose native language is Polish. Since Veselka is basically a neighborhood coffee shop, Birchard likes to support local artists by displaying their art in the restaurant. One outside wall is covered with a mural by a local artist who changes it every few years.

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Osprey, FL
Association member: Ernie Vroom
Operation: Flying Bridge Restaurant
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 23 years
Seats: 318
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Business is flat. It's partially because of the economy, but mostly because of the overbuilding of restaurants in the area," says owner **Ernie Vroom**. Five restaurants opened in the last year in the same block as the Flying Bridge.

Vroom advertises in the newspaper and on TV to beef up business. His restaurant, which serves primarily seafood and steak items, appeals to the community's older citizens. "Sarasota County has one of the highest median ages; I think it's 55. We cater to this clientele by keeping the food simple. We don't heavily spice it, and we serve healthier items," he says.

The restaurant is family-owned, and all the members of Vroom's family work there. "The fact that it is family-run and that we have one of the best views in the county—we look out over the water—is what makes our restaurant special," says Vroom.

4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Akron, OH
Association member: Ernest Genovese
Operation: Art's Place
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 63 years
Seats: 200
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Art's Place is a hopping spot that draws a rich mix of diners, says daytime manager **Jean Theiss**. A lunch customer might be rubbing elbows with a state senator, a mechanic, a schoolteacher, the town mayor or a next-door neighbor. "A news article the other week described the place as formica and vinyl," laughs Theiss. "It's a nice, clean restaurant that is very unpretentious. We have paper napkins and paper plates, and you can come in here in a formal or in shorts."

The restaurant's chicken and prime-rib specialties and the almost defiantly unhip atmosphere appeal to a loyal group of Akronites: 65 percent of business is daily repeat customers. "We have a friendly staff. Some of our waitresses have been here for 15 to 23 years. They know the customers, and the customers know them. People like that," says Theiss.

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Paducah, KY
Association members: Arlene and Richard Jenks
Operation: Old South Cafeteria
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 15 years
Seats: 180
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

"The last three years have been up years. We have seen good steady growth," says co-owner **Richard Jenks**. "When I read about the horrible economy in New England and in Texas, I feel for those people. It doesn't seem that way here at all."

The cafeteria features local fare such as fried chicken, catfish, cornbread and turnip greens. "It's nothing too fancy, but it's good home-cooked food for a good price. Most meals are between $3.50 and $4.50," says Jenks. Most customers are senior citizens or workers who enjoy the cafeteria-style service.

Competition in the area has quadrupled in the last 12 years, says Jenks, but most competitors are located on the other side of town, close to a shopping mall. "I don't think other restaurants hurt our business that much because we appeal to a certain segment of the community," he says.

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Oakdale, MN
Association members: Robert D. and Kathy Miller
Operation: Toby's on the Lake
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 14 years
Seats: 225
Meals served: Lunch, dinner, Sunday brunch

"Things are going great," says **Kathy Miller,** who along with her husband, **Bob Miller,** owns Toby's on the Lake, located on Tanner's Lake in suburban St. Paul. While customers seem more cautious in today's economy, Miller believes that Toby's affordable fine dining, comfortable atmosphere and friendly service keep customers coming back. Having a great location doesn't hurt either. Toby's is only minutes from the downtown hubs of St. Paul and Minneapolis, and the restaurant is adjacent to the suburban corporate offices of the 3M Company.

The old English atmosphere and house specialties such as prime rib and fresh seafood attract the young professionals who live or work in the Twin Cities area.

"Business is still growing after 14 years," marvels Miller. To keep pace with this growth, the Millers are considering the expansion of their restaurant facility, which in addition to the dining room includes a 100-seat banquet room and decks that overlook the lake.

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Broken Arrow, OK
Association member: Dollie McFarland
Operation: Rex Restaurants
Profile: Fast food restaurants
In business: 15 years
Seats: 90
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Although the Oklahoma economy has been hard hit by the recent recession, Rex Restaurants have continued to prosper. "Business has been great," says **Terri McAuliff,** senior executive vice president of the family-run company that owns nine Rex Restaurant stores in Oklahoma. "In the past two years our sales have increased by 145 percent," McAuliff adds. "We're excited about expanding into Texas and other states."

How can business at Rex Restaurants thrive in a depressed economy filled with competitors? "We've found a unique niche," explains McAuliff—a niche for fast-food convenience and prices, but with food made from homemade ingredients.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Provo, UT
Association members: Stuart Smith, Raynal Pearson
Operation: Annie's Pantry
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 6 years
Seats: 120
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Business is "fair" at Annie's Pantry, according to **Stuart Smith,** who co-owns the restaurant with **Raynal Pearson.** "We're coasting along," says Smith. Annie's Pantry has suffered from a combination of a sluggish local economy and a recent influx of competitors, including national chains that have opened within a mile of the restaurant. "The competition has really hurt us," says Smith.

The clientele at Annie's Pantry consists largely of guests at the adjacent TraveLodge motel and, on weekends, local residents. To compete with its new neighbors, the restaurant offers weekend specials such as an all-you-can-eat buffet or a prime-rib dinner. "The specials really seem to perk things up," notes Smith.

9 PACIFIC

Location: Visalia, CA
Association member: Patt Kong
Operation: Lamp Liter Inn & Restaurant
Profile: Midscale restaurant and inn
In business: 11 years
Seats: 80
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Mother Nature is largely to blame for the belt-tightening times at the Lamp Liter Inn & Restaurant, which is located in a growing agricultural community in the San Joaquin Valley. According to owner **Patt Kong,** California's worst drought in years has led to water cutbacks. As if that weren't bad enough, last December's freeze destroyed the citrus crop, one of the principal crops of the region. "With the unemployment rate in the farming industry around 21 percent, people are having trouble putting food on their tables," says Kong. The price of local produce has soared.

Travelers staying at the inn account for a large part of her restaurant business, and its location on the outskirts of town draws a healthy lunchtime business crowd. Kong also relies on local residents, who seem to be the ones scaling back the most, to support her restaurant and the 400-seat banquet facilities.

—Jennifer Batty and Katherine Palumbo

The flavor of flowers

Spring is in the air, and blossoms are blooming. As you roam through the garden picking flowers to brighten your tables, you might consider petals to spruce up your menu as well.

Free of preservatives and chemicals and low in calories, flowers have added their unique taste to dishes for centuries. And with such a long history, it is unlikely that scientists will discover any life-threatening side effects. (Of course, only *unsprayed* flowers are safe to eat.)

Even backyard flowerbeds can offer many useful—and flavorful—varieties that at first may not seem suitable for the plate or the palate. Pansies, for example, add a light floral flavor to salads. Geraniums, especially the rose-scented variety, enhance sorbets and butters. Chrysanthemums, although slightly bitter, work well in salads if used sparingly or as part of a floral confetti. Even roses—whose flavors range from floral and lush to metallic and bitter—can be used to flavor salads, butters and vinegars and taste great candied.

—Washington Times

Spears of spring

To many a connoisseur, the appearance of asparagus means the arrival of spring. But these green stalks are much more than the herald of a new season. Asparagus—green, purple and white varieties—holds a place of honor in history across the world.

Asparagus ranked high with the great minds of the past. Proust praised it for its delicate shades of purple, and Cato lauded its digestibility. First-century poet Pliny the Younger was even more passionate, declaring asparagus an aphrodisiac. Marie Antoinette supposedly combined egg yolks and asparagus to maintain her sexual vigor.

Even these days, the celebration of asparagus goes beyond the kitchen and into the streets. Italians in Bassano del Grappa in the Veneto hold an annual white-asparagus-growing contest on the first Sunday in May. Succeeding Sundays find festivals in Lombardy, Piedmont and Emilia-Romana. In Spain, the town of Gava celebrates spring with a parade of giant papier-mache vegetables and an exhibition of folk art fashioned out of asparagus. In Schwetzingen, Germany, *Spargel Samstag* is celebrated on the first Saturday in May.

Schrobenhausen, north of Munich, hosts its own asparagus museum—three floors of exhibits where fans can learn about the history, cultivation and art of the stalks.

—Food Arts

Restaurant bytes

First there were the yellow pages, now there is the yellow disk—the Yellow Disk Restaurant Finder, that is. And it could be a hot new sector for restaurant advertising.

The Yellow Disk Restaurant Finder is a software package distributed by Information, Inc., and it offers customers who have computers a chance to pull restaurant dining choices up on their screens. Hungry hackers can just slide in a disk and view information about restaurants, including type of cuisine, price range, operating hours and wheelchair accessibility. Listings also detail such amenities as nonsmoking sections, children's menus and express lunches.

Customers must buy the disk, but no modem is required and there are no telephone or on-line charges. The Restaurant Finder disk is currently debuting in the Chicago area, and there are plans to cover areas nationwide within the next two years.

Participating restaurants are listed free for six months. After that, an advertising fee is charged. For an additional fee, a listing can be customized with company advertising, logos or a ticker-tape message across the bottom of the screen.

—Information, Inc.

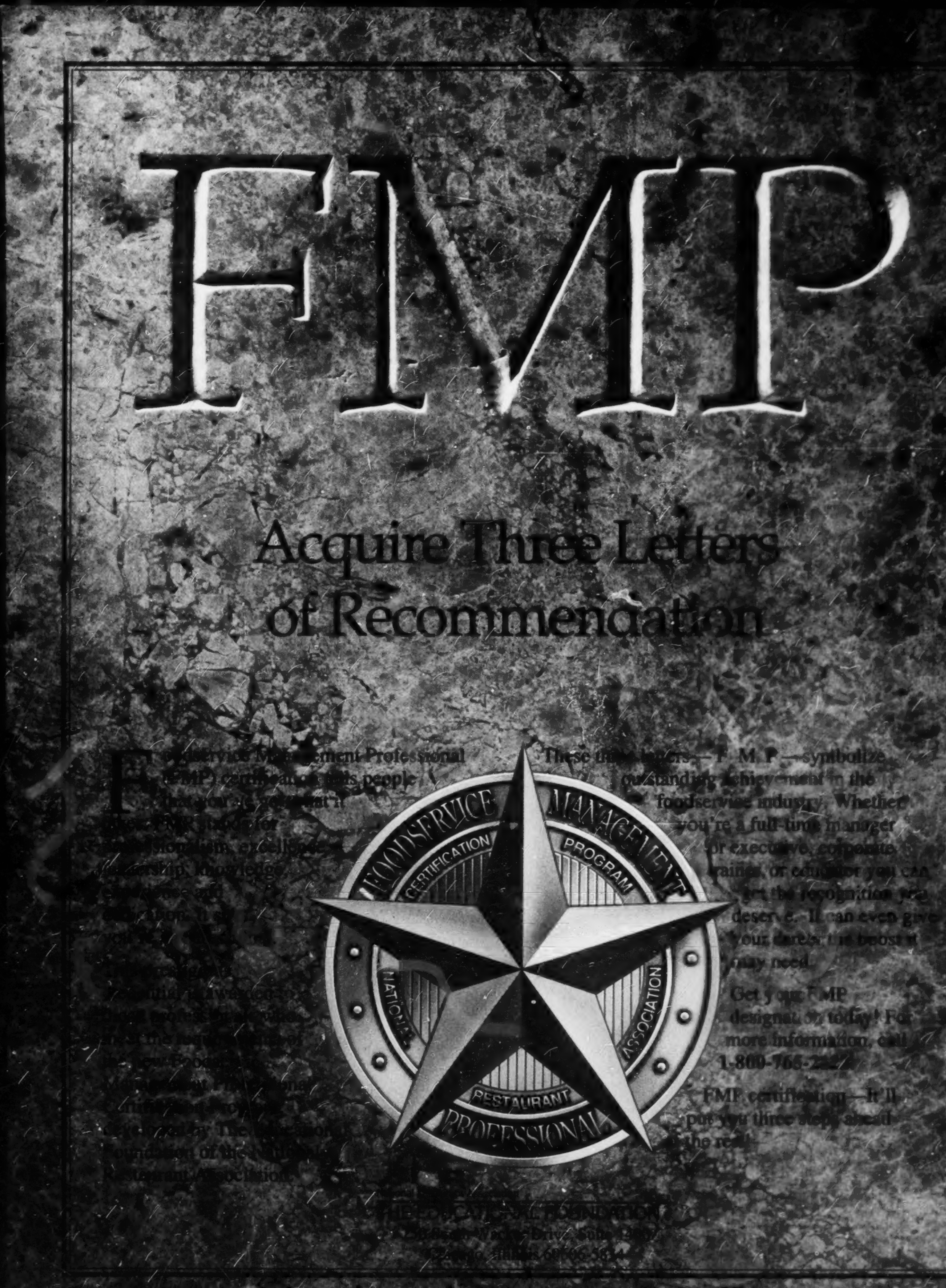
Burgers, fries and a gallon of milk

In its ongoing attempt to scoop the competition and boost sales, one McDonald's store recently began testing a new line of products that usually line the shelves of convenience stores and supermarkets.

The new venture, known as McExtras, consists of such staples as eggs, milk, margarine and bread. The "groceries," kept in refrigerated cases near the cashiers, are available for sale at the counter and through the drive-thru window.

McDonald's apparently considers anyone who sells food to be a legitimate competitor, and that includes convenience stores and supermarkets. If McExtras passes the test, it could take quite a bite out of retail rivals.

--Advertising Age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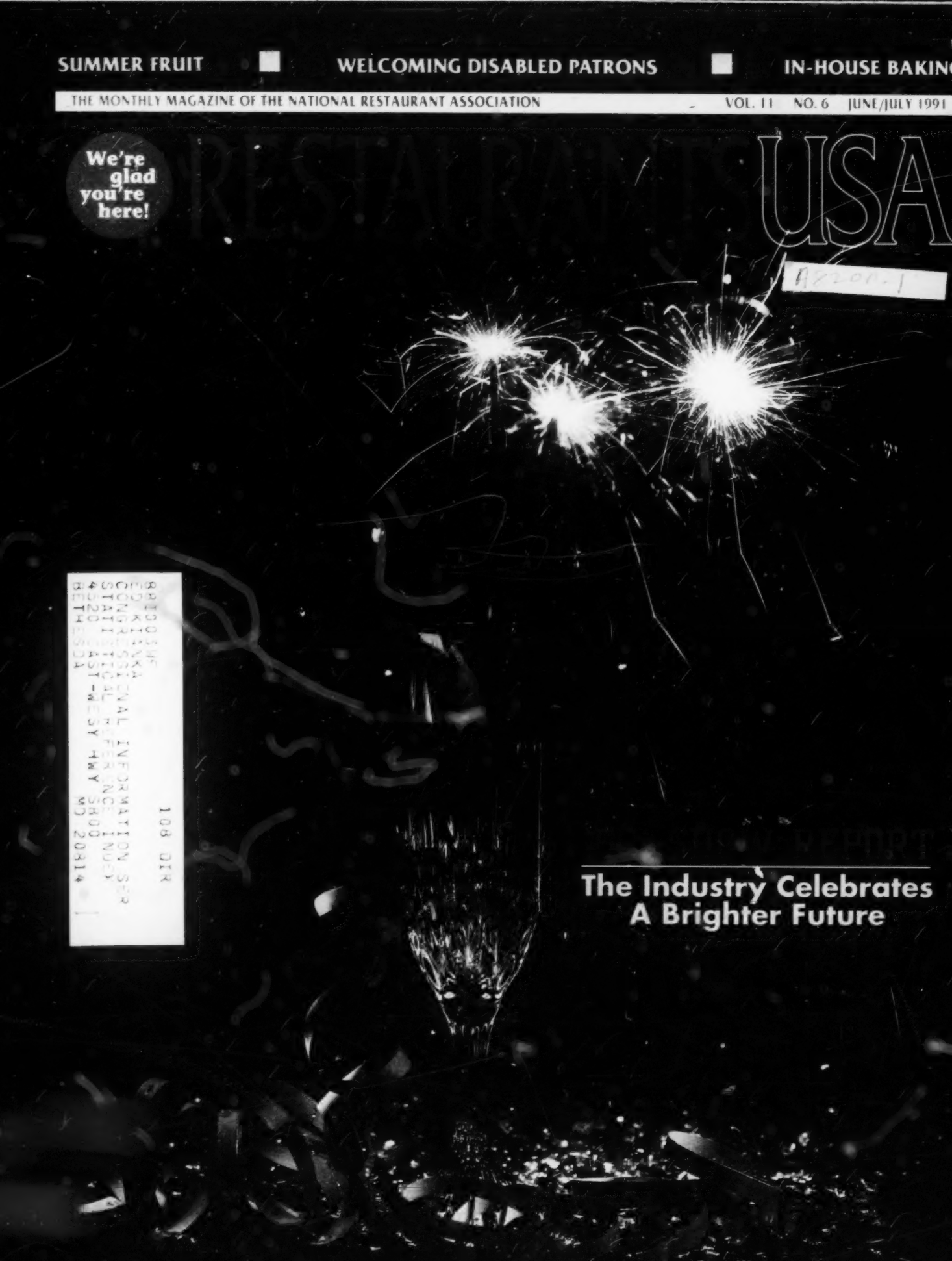

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The Industry Celebrates A Brighter Future

Fed up with Congress telling you how to run your restaurant?

MAYBE IT'S TIME TO TAKE YOUR CASE TO CONGRESS

Attend the National Restaurant Association 1991 Public Affairs Conference, September 23-25, 1991, in Washington, DC

Meet face-to-face with your lawmakers in their Capitol Hill Offices; hear top speakers from Congress and the White House discuss foodservice issues; host hundreds of Senators and Representatives at the association's gala Chef d'Oeuvre reception on Capitol Hill, and much more.

For more information contact Denise Roach in the association's government affairs department at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5909.

EXECUTIVE STUDY GROUP SERIES

Risk and Safety Managers
7/31–8/2 Colorado Springs, CO

Internal Audit
9/24–27 Orlando, FL

Financial Officers
10/2–4 Cape Cod, MA

Tax Executives
10/2–4 Cape Cod, MA

For more information on specific study groups, contact Rosemary Curtis at (312) 853-2525.

Large Independent Operators
10/8–11 Philadelphia, PA

Human Resources
10/9–11 Atlanta, GA

Multiunit Architects, Engineers and Construction Officers (MAECO)
10/9–11 Atlanta, GA

Management Information Systems
10/15–18 Atlanta, GA

Marketing Executives
10/16–19 San Diego, CA

Foodservice Purchasing Managers
10/23–24 Denver, CO

Quality Assurance
10/23–25 St. Louis, MO

Multiunit Environmental Affairs Officers
11/6–8 San Diego, CA

The Executive Study Groups present semi-annual professional development programs for executives who would like to meet with their industry peers to share ideas and concerns. Executives in each of the aforementioned disciplines from member foodservice companies are welcome and encouraged to participate.

FMP TEST DATES

7/23 Houston, TX
8/5 New Orleans, LA
8/10 Los Angeles, CA

SEMINARS

SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation
7/15–17 Chicago, IL
9/30–10/2 Chicago, IL

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Executive Editor Jeffrey R. Prince
Editor Paul Moomaw
Managing Editor Melanie A. Crosby
Staff Contributors
Jennifer Batty, Pat DiDomenico, Elizabeth Gordon, Andrew McLauchlin, Nancy Michalski, Susan Mills, Anne Papa Curtis, B. Hudson Riehle, Denise Roach, Diane Welland

Art Direction
Magazine: Tom Bellucci
Covers: Richard Earle, Liz Dalgetty

Administrative Assistant Susan Kessler
Editorial Secretary Ronda Bowers
Intern Kathy Palumbo

Editorial office and association headquarters 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW Washington DC 20036-3097 (202) 331-5900
Chicago office 150 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2000 Chicago, IL 60601 (312) 853-2525
Educational Foundation 250 S. Wacker Dr. Suite 1400 Chicago, IL 60606 (312) 715-1010

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

John R. Farquharson, president
ARASERVE, Philadelphia, PA

Upbeat atmosphere at the Show

This is my first report to you as president of the National Restaurant Association. I look forward to working with all of you to make our industry stronger than ever in the coming year. Our association is one of the most influential trade organizations in America today, and my hope is that we will build on that strength.

I had the opportunity to meet many of you at the 72nd annual National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago in May. This year's Show featured acres of new food products, equipment innovations and service strategies. The optimistic attitudes of attendees and exhibitors left the impression that the problems created by the fluctuating economy are not insurmountable and that the future looks bright for the industry.

If you were not able to join us at the Show this year, mark your calendar for next May so you won't miss the foodservice industry's most important event.

Congressional Visit Program

Twelve members of Congress attended the Show this year, including Sen. Strom Thurmond (R-SC), Sen. Connie Mack (R-FL) and Sen. Dan Coats (R-IN). We welcomed the chance to introduce these members of Congress to our industry and to speak to them about several issues of importance to the membership.

Association champions the environment

Many issues concerning protecting the environment were raised at this year's Show, particularly with regard to operations and marketing. We encourage operators to continue to act as leaders on environmental issues, especially at the community level. In the back of this issue of ***Restaurants USA*** you will find a pullout place mat that can be reproduced for your restaurant's use in sharing an ecological message.

Labor and tax issues

The Civil Rights Act of 1991 passed in the House with 272 votes, falling short of the 290 votes needed to override an expected veto by President Bush. As currently worded, the bill would put more of the burden of proof onto employers when countering charges of unintentional discrimination and would permit juries to award unlimited compensatory damages to victims of intentional discrimination.

The legislation has now passed on to the Senate where members of both parties are discussing a compromise. A vote is expected fairly soon on the issue.

Two bills regarding health coverage have been introduced in the Senate, one by Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) and the other by Sen. George Mitchell (D-ME) and Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA). Both bills leave the current system of employer-provided insurance unchanged but ask for a tax on businesses that do not provide insurance for their employees. These "play or pay" bills will begin what is likely to be a heated debate on the issue of health care during the 1991-92 session. The association opposes these bills; businesses alone cannot foot the bill for correcting the problems of our health-care system.

Working with state restaurant associations, we have more than doubled the number of sponsors we had at

this time last year for the repeal of the FICA tax on tips. We have already garnered 155 sponsors in the House and 22 in the Senate. There is a lot of momentum at the grassroots level as we seek to gain even more sponsors.

To help repeal this unfair tax, call or write your representatives in Congress and attend meetings in your state where your representative will be speaking and raise this issue. If you know that your member has already signed on as a sponsor, send him or her a thank-you letter.

Gearing up for the Public Affairs Conference

This year's Public Affairs Conference will be held September 23–25 in Washington DC. The conference gives restaurateurs a chance to come to Capitol Hill and learn about the legislative process. It also gives you the opportunity to meet with members of Congress both in their offices and in the more informal, social atmosphere of the *Chef d'oeuvre* reception held on Capitol Hill.

This year, conference attendees from each state are being encouraged to take their members of Congress out to dinner, where they can further discuss the important issues that will affect the industry.

For more information about the Public Affairs Conference, call Diane Dorman in the association's Government Affairs Department at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5900.

Foundation rolls out FMP

Foodservice managers now have the chance to earn credentials that symbolize their outstanding achievement in the industry. The Foodservice Management Professional (FMP) Certification, offered by the Foundation, can be earned by foodservice professionals who display necessary foodservice knowledge. During the Show, nearly 150 industry leaders became the first certified FMPs after taking the certification exam. For the dates and locations of upcoming exams and more information on the certification program, contact the Certification Department of the Educational Foundation at (800) 765-2122.

The Foundation also introduced the "Servsafe Responsible Alcohol Service Program" at the Show in Chicago. This program trains managers to design and enforce an alcohol policy for their operations. The program also shows managers how to train their servers to recognize inebriation and how to intervene effectively. For more information, contact the Foundation at (800) 765-2122.

We welcome the 202 new members who joined the association in May and June. Your active participation in association programs will strengthen your operation while strengthening the association in its dealings with the federal government, the media and the public.

Sincerely,

John Farquharson

John R. Farquharson
President and Chairman of the Board

COVER STORY: THE 1991 SHOW

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Doctors and lawyers have always been certified. Now foodservice professionals can be, too.

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Some operators discovered long ago the secret to serving customers with disabilities, and the benefits are many. Here are some tips to help you get ready for the ADA.

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Knives flashed, steam hissed and medal-winning food presentations emerged from glass kitchens. The Culinary Classic was a Show highlight.

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Front and back cover photos by Gary Landsman.
Show photos by Oscar & Associates, Tony Romano and Steinkamp/Ballogg.

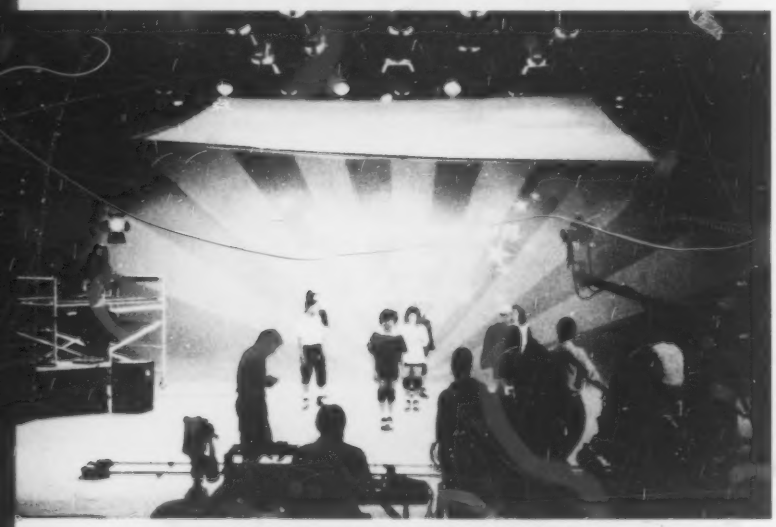
CHRIE video welcomes in the future

A music video aimed at young people is the centerpiece of a new campaign to alert students to opportunities in the foodservice and hospitality industry.

Produced by the Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE), the "Welcome in the Future" video reaches middle-school and high-school students through a familiar medium. "Today's teenagers have grown up as part of the 'MTV generation,' " says Doug Adair, executive vice president of CHRIE. "A music video is an effective way to reach this target market. This format also allows us to emphasize the fun aspects of working in the industry—a strong selling point for teenagers."

The video entertains as well as educates. Between takes of singing and dancing, performers discuss the hospitality and tourism industry, responding to questions regarding entry-level opportunities, education and parental qualms about the industry. The video can also be customized to contain information about a particular school, company or association.

To purchase the "Welcome in the Future" video or for more information, contact Debbie Peckerol in the CHRIE office at (202) 331-5990.



CHRIE's new hospitality careers campaign targets youngsters through a familiar medium: the music video.

Great Menu ideas available

It has been said that the menu is the "soul of a restaurant." The menu reflects and markets the most definitive part of the restaurant—the food itself.

Restaurateurs interested in menu development and design, operators wishing to re-create the offerings and prices of the 1960s, and those seeking menus

(Continued on next page)

It takes more than red peppers

Ever since chefs Paul Prudhomme and Justin Wilson made Cajun food a trend, many have claimed roots in the bayous of Louisiana—and that goes for food products as well as chefs.

The state of Louisiana fears that the increasing number of fake Cajun food products is having a negative economic impact on legitimate Louisiana companies, and they've decided to do something about it.

The Louisiana Legislature has adopted a registered logo to certify true Louisiana Cajun food products.

"In the 1980s the number of Louisiana food manufacturing companies grew from 100 to more than 300," says Louisiana Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry Bob Odom. "This was a direct result of the Cajun food craze sweeping the nation."

Odom and his staff found that many imitators selling so-called Cajun products knew so little about the true taste of Cajun food that their products consisted of little more than red peppers. Louisiana Cajun manufacturers worry that poor imitations could hurt the public's perception of Cajun food.

"The heart of Cajun cooking is spices, not red peppers," says Odom. "Food manufacturing for sales outside of Louisiana has become a major part of our economy. We are going to do whatever is necessary to protect that industry."

Since the logo was introduced at the end of March, more than 100 Louisiana companies have applied to the department for permission to have the logo affixed to their labels.

Dining service sponsors "Day of Giving"

More than 4,000 homeless persons enjoyed a recent spring picnic on Capitol Hill, dining on homemade, traditional picnic fare prepared by the University of Maryland Department of Dining Services. The Dining Services volunteers joined with a coalition of 60 university student groups and student volunteers from other area colleges to provide the "Day of Giving" picnic for the homeless.

To help fund the "Day of Giving," students at the University of Maryland donated points from their meal plans and cash to purchase food and clothes to be given to the homeless persons at the picnic. The dining services staff prepared a meal that included fried chicken, ham, baked beans, cole slaw, potato salad, rolls, fruit juice and fresh fruit.

The attendees got a chance to enjoy not only the elaborate spread, but also music, guest speakers and an "open mike" session that allowed active participation in the entertainment.

In the last three years, the University of Maryland Department of Dining Services has prepared more than 14,000 meals for homeless people and has donated surplus food to provide an additional 5,000 meals.

with lighter fare and nutritional information will want to know more about the National Restaurant Association's menu collection. Over the past year, the Information Service and Library (ISAL) has been cataloging the menu collection using computer software.

The menus are searchable by 15 characteristics, including restaurant name, date, location, type of cuisine, daypart, specific foods and nutritional information. Therefore, a quick computer scan will tell, for example, if any menus feature shrimp scampi on a dinner menu in Tennessee or will find a menu to derive the price of tuna sandwiches in the 1970s.

The collection, which now numbers nearly 4,000 menus, expands annually as a result of the association's Great Menu Contest. Though some date back to the 1930s and 1940s, the majority are from the past 12 years. The collection also features menus from foodservice operations such as museums, hospitals and other institutions, banquet and catering, clubs and shipboard.

The menu collection is housed in a special room in the library and may be reviewed and used by association members. The ISAL also welcomes donations of old menus. For more information, call (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960.

FEEDBACK

Student salutes forum

Editor's note: The following letter is from a student from Widener University in Chester, Pennsylvania, who participated in the Educational Foundation's Salute to Excellence events held in May in Chicago. This year's events included a banquet and education forums to honor and help guide some of the nation's top foodservice/hospitality students. The student forum was hosted by outgoing association president Michael Hurst.

Address your comments about ***Restaurants USA*** and current foodservice issues to: ***Restaurants USA*** Feedback, National Restaurant Association, 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. Submissions may be edited for length.

Dear Mr. Hurst:
The Salute to Excellence Student Forum and Banquet was an experience that I will never forget. I don't remember ever feeling so honored before. Seeing and speaking to all of the industry leaders who were present was really wonderful.

Many times throughout my college career, I wondered if all of the hard work and dedication was really worth it. After this experience, I am glad that I never gave up or settled for second best. I now know that there is a lot of support out there and a whole lot more to be accomplished.

Thank you for a day to remember.

—Anthony Magnus
Willingboro, New Jersey

BOARDROOM

New officers and directors voted in

John R. Farquharson, president of ARASERVE, a division of ARA Services, Inc., in Philadelphia, was elected chairman of the board and president of the National Restaurant Association at the association's recent board meeting and convention in Chicago.

Elected to the one-year term as association vice president was Richard E. Marriott, vice chairman of the board of directors of the Marriott Corporation in Washington DC. The 1991–1992 treasurer of the association is Stephen E. Elmont, president of Creative Gourmets, Ltd., of Boston.

Also during the May convention, the following were elected to serve three-year terms on the association's board of directors: Giovanni Coratolo, Port of Italy, Temple Hills, Maryland; Don Curley, Franco's, Columbus, Ohio; Denise Marie Fugo, Sammy's, Cleveland, Ohio; Gary Gerard, Red Geranium Enterprises, New Harmony, Indiana; Edward Grace III, Phelps Grace Co., Inc., East Providence, Rhode Island; Richard Kubach, Jr., Melrose Diner, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Xavier Teixido, Columbus Inn, Wilmington, Delaware; and Ruben Villavicencio, R&M Food Services, Brea, California.

In addition, other business was discussed and resolved at the May board meeting and convention.

The **Membership** committee approved renewal of six dual-membership contracts with state associations in Alabama, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, Ohio and Utah. A new contract was approved for the Delaware Restaurant Association.

John Farquharson, left, 1991–92 association president, announced the names of his new committee chairmen at the Board meeting preceding the Show. He is pictured here with outgoing president Michael Hurst, center, and Show chairman Joe Fassler, right. Fassler, who presided over this year's successful Show, has agreed to serve as chairman of the Convention Committee for another year.

The **State Relations** committee approved the development of a contest between state associations to encourage grassroots meetings with members of Congress. Points will be earned for each meeting held; contest winners will be awarded airfare and registration to the 1992 Monterey Wine Festival.

The **Technical Services** committee will invite an FDA official to its fall meeting in Washington to discuss Unicode and recent changes in shell-handling regulations.

The **75th Anniversary** task force, charged with planning a celebration for the association's diamond anniversary, determined that a special logo will be developed, press releases on the industry's history will be issued, and the 75th anniversary theme will be adopted for the 1994 convention.

Association hosts members of Congress at Show

"We're glad you're here" was the message foodservice operators and suppliers gave 12 members of Congress as they welcomed the lawmakers to Chicago for the National Restaurant Association Show. The event was also an opportunity to share the foodservice industry's concerns with the legislators.

Association director Scotty Langham, right, welcomes Senator Strom Thurmond (R-SC) to a Show exhibit.

Three senators and nine representatives traveled from Capitol Hill to the Show as part of the association's Congressional Visit Program. Legislators toured the Show floor, getting a better appreciation of the broad range of foods, equipment and services that make up the foodservice industry.

"There's no better way than a tour of our Chicago Show to show you how dynamic and complex our industry is," said outgoing association president Michael E. Hurst in his welcoming remarks to the lawmakers. "The Show gives you the chance to see an industry that really feels the impact of many of the laws you pass."

According to Rep. Bill Barrett (R-NE), a freshman member of the House Education and Labor Committee, "Attending the National Restaurant Association's Chicago trade show was a highlight of my first months as a member of Congress. I especially enjoyed and benefited from interacting with members of the business community who are on the cutting edge of small-business and labor issues."

This year marked the eighth straight year that members of Congress have visited the Show. The Congressional Visit Program is one of several annual political education events made possible by corporate contributions from foodservice operators and suppliers to the association's Congressional Leadership Forum.

—*Andrew McLauchlin*

Photos by Steve Feferman

Exhibitors at the Show display the latest in restaurant cutlery to Rep. Gary Franks (R-CT), right.

DCROUNDUP

□ *Talk of health-care reform heats up.* On May 23, Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) introduced legislation that would require all businesses with more than 100 employees to either provide health insurance for employees or pay a tax to support a public health plan. In addition, the proposal includes measures to contain health-care costs and reform insurance underwriting practices.

Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell (D-ME) has also announced his plan to overhaul the health-care system with a similar "play or pay" mandate.

The Rockefeller and Mitchell plans are likely to serve as the starting points for debate on the health-care issue during 1991 and 1992.

□ *FICA-repeal fight gathers steam.* Bills to repeal a 1987 law that requires employers to pay Social Security (FICA) payroll taxes on all tips employees earn has received a recent surge of support on Capitol Hill.

H.R. 1472 and S. 765, bills introduced just three months ago by Rep. Byron Dorgan (D-ND) and Sen. John Breaux (D-LA), have attracted 154 cosponsors in the House and 21 in the Senate, with 36 House members signing on in the first three weeks of June.

The National Restaurant Association is now aiming for at least 218 U.S. representatives and 51 U.S. senators—over half of each legislative chamber—to cosponsor the legislation. Getting a majority of Congress to support the legislation would pressure House and Senate tax-writing committees to act on the bills.

You can ask your members of Congress to cosponsor the bills by writing to the U.S. Senate, Washington DC 20510, or to the U.S. House, Washington DC 20515. To find out whether your members of Congress have already signed up as cosponsors, contact Patti Stinger at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5953.

□ *INS cracks down on hiring of illegal aliens.* Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Commissioner Gene McNary recently instructed INS officials to initiate an "intensive six-month nationwide effort" to penalize employers who violate a 1986 immigration law.

The law requires employers to verify each worker's identity and authorization to work in the United States and to complete and retain an Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9) form for each worker.

Until now, the INS says its enforcement officers have spent a great deal of time educating employers about the law. McNary's new directive excuses them from those duties and withdraws INS's earlier policy that required officials to educate employers about the law's requirements before assessing civil monetary penalties for violations.

McNary said he will review the new enforcement policy in the fall.

Employers can get recorded information about their responsibilities under the law by contacting a local office of the INS.

The Manor minds the environment

The Manor restaurant in West Orange, New Jersey, recently stood shoulder-to-shoulder with New Jersey's environmental elite, receiving an Outstanding Achievement Award from the state's Department of Environmental Protection in recognition of its efforts in solid-waste management. The award-winning fine-dining establishment was the only restaurant selected.

Few operations have a solid-waste program as broad and effective as The Manor's. "It is very gratifying," says owner and operator Harry Knowles of the program. "Not only is it more efficient, but financially it's a big plus."

It started with a meeting

Knowles traces the development of this broad plan to a National Restaurant Association environmental committee that he sat on several years ago—back when recycling and solid-waste management were just emerging issues. "I came back from that meeting and decided to do something," he says. That's when he and his staff went to work.

"We really didn't know anything about recycling," says David O. Oster, The Manor's director of facilities, who oversees the nuts and bolts of the program. "Everything we did was basically trial and error."

The staff spent hours contacting private and public agencies in search of guidelines and information. A county waste expert and representatives of recycling companies stepped in and inspected the restaurant, offering suggestions on collection and disposal.

"The program kept getting more involved than we first envisioned, but we kept on working," says Knowles. The Manor now recycles about 75 percent of its waste.

Sorting and selling

Sorting is the key element in The Manor's solid-waste program, not only because recyclers demand it, but because the restaurant recycles so many different materials and uses so many avenues of disposal. Employees are taught to "separate at the source," so that it only has to be done once.

An easy-to-follow system for employees had to be devised. The answer was color-coding. Each type of recyclable material was given a certain color designation. All glass bottles, for example, are placed in yellow containers. Clam and oyster shells go in orange buckets, and aluminum bins are blue.

Much of the material collected by The Manor is sold. All glass, which can total more than 14 tons per month, is collected and sold to a recycler. Fats and grease (waste products often difficult to dispose of) are sold to tallow companies along with bones. Cardboard is sorted, baled and picked up by another area recycler. Aluminum is given to the town of West Orange, which receives tax credits for the aluminum it recycles. The total amounts sold are impressive. In 1990, the restaurant sold 178,380 pounds of glass, 127,680 pounds of cardboard and 79,000 pounds of grease and fat.

To handle materials that are either nonrecyclable or have a low resale value, The Manor acquired a license to use the Essex County incinerator, where materials are burned to create fuel. The load disposed of in this way includes wood boxes, waxed cardboard and nonrecyclable plastics.

Few materials that aren't sold escape the recycling room's pulper, pulverizer and compactor. A pulverizer known as "The Cannibal" pulverizes seafood shells (about 36,000 pounds' worth in 1990), which are then used as a soil enhancer on the restaurant's 20 acres of landscaped gardens.

Grass and garden waste is composted right on the grounds. Discarded metal from renovations or old equipment is taken to scrap dealers and sold. Wooden crates and baskets suitable for reuse are taken to a local farmer. All leftover plastic cans, drums and barrels, instead of becoming trash themselves, are reused as the color-coded receptacles for waste materials.

The Manor is also hard on its purveyors, pushing them to take back whatever equipment they provide. Two such items alone—oyster boxes and aluminum-coated ice packs—account for nearly 200 pieces and 800 pounds of waste per month. "Our purveyors can't even leave a pallet here," says Oster. "They know that if they do, they'll have two to haul away next week."

Through these alternative means of disposal, The Manor has significantly reduced its trash load. Oster predicts a more than $70,000 drop in hauling fees compared with past years—from $93,000 per year to around $20,000. Before the waste-management campaign began, the restaurant needed one to two pickups per week. So far this year, it has needed only two pickups. Oster expects a full payback on the program's start-up investment within three years.

A matter of teamwork

Molding the more than 300 Manor employees into a solid-waste team was no easy task. "People generally resist change, even when it's for the better," says Oster. Simple and thorough training was the key. Employees were taught to "separate at the source," to look for "less is better" in packaging and to favor recyclable products when purchasing.

Oster reports that employees now eagerly support the program. "When they see the figures we're producing, they know they've contributed to it," he says.

Words from the wise

When asked what advice he would give to operators launching a solid-waste program, Knowles offers one key word: "Persevere." He admits that it isn't easy. "The employees will fight it at first," says Knowles, "and certain agencies are not going to be cooperative. It may take 20 phone calls to get to the right person. But you can't give up. And it will pay off." Take it from a man—and his Manor—who knows.

—Melanie A. Crosby

Every restaurateur can take strides to help the environment. In the back of this issue of ***Restaurants USA*** you will find a special pull-out place mat that you can reproduce to help spread an ecological message.

F ★ M ★ P ★

THREE LETTERS THAT SET A NEW STANDARD

Foodservice management is getting a boost as a profession this month as the Educational Foundation unveils the FMP certification program.

by Pat DiDomenico

The Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association has embarked on a brand new program aimed at promoting professionalism in the foodservice industry. The Foodservice Management Professional (FMP) certification program recognizes those who have achieved excellence among managers in the foodservice industry.

The FMP program provides certification to persons who display necessary foodservice knowledge through their experience and education, as well as through their proficiency in a written exam. FMP program planners, including Foundation President Daniel Gescheidle, introduced the program with the realization that the industry is becoming more complex each day.

"Today, foodservice management requires highly trained, well-educated individuals," says Gescheidle. "FMP certification, which emphasizes professional development and job knowledge, reinforces that fact."

During the National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago, nearly 150 industry leaders took the test and became the first certified FMPs. After passing the exam, Ted J. Balestreri was granted the inaugural certification. Balestreri is chairman of the Educational Foundation's board of trustees and is the president of the Sardine Factory in Monterey, California.

"I think FMP is the most important foodservice program to come along in the last couple of decades," says Balestreri, a past association president. "This is a very practical, well-rounded program that can turn into dollars and cents for a business. Whoever takes this program will know something about everything that affects the industry. You'll have a much more sophisticated manager."

Balestreri says that FMP benefits do not stop with beefing up a manager's credentials. Establishments will now be able to promote the fact that their managers are professionally certified, thus giving their businesses added credibility and possibly more customers.

In addition, FMP status will make a foodservice manager more marketable when searching for another foodservice management position. FMP organizers hope to see certification used as a hiring criterion in determining professionalism and excellence.

"FMP certification will eventually differentiate applicants during hiring. Those who have it will certainly be at an advantage," says Balestreri. "That symbol will tell an employer that this person is serious about his or her career."

In addition, FMP certification will help foodservice managers gain the respect and recognition they deserve—something that years of hard work and dedication may not have brought.

Within the next four years, the foodservice industry will need 400,000 new managers, yet there are currently fewer than 60,000 people enrolled in hospitality education programs in U.S. secondary schools. Obviously, a majority of tomorrow's foodservice managers will rise through the ranks and will not come from foodservice education backgrounds. The FMP program gives experience-based professionals a chance to earn recognition for their knowledge and excellence in the industry.

"A lot of foodservice managers have gone through the school of hard knocks, but they lack a diploma and formal education in their field," explains Ellen Moore, director of certification and instructional services at the Educational Foundation. "The FMP program will help to reconfirm a manager's knowledge and professionalism in the industry."

According to Moore, the foodservice industry is slowly shedding its image as a temporary stepping stone in which to practice management skills. FMP certification, she says, will go a long way toward promoting the management position as a career.

Eligibility requirements

Those eligible for FMP certification include three types of individuals:

□ persons currently employed full-time as foodservice unit managers,

multiunit managers and corporate executives with responsibilities for foodservice operations

□ foodservice management educators and

□ corporate trainers responsible for management training.

Applicants must meet education and experience requirements before taking the FMP certification exam. More experience in the field means the applicant requires less foodservice operations education. For example, to be eligible for FMP status, a manager with 10 years' experience needs to complete only one management development course from the Educational Foundation or to attend an FMP review session. Meanwhile, a manager with less experience would have to meet more education requirements. Applicants must have at least three years of management experience to apply.

Educators applying for FMP certification must have at least three years of full-time teaching in hospitality, foodservice, culinary or equivalent programs and at least two years of supervisory or management experience in foodservice operations. Applicants who work as corporate trainers are required to have three years' experience as a full-time trainer and at least two years of supervisory or management experience in foodservice operations.

The foodservice education and training requirements can come from several different areas, including college foodservice courses, group training through individual companies, foodservice courses organized by state associations and home-study courses. Educational Foundation courses are also offered at 50 different colleges in 18 states.

Certification exam

After meeting the education and experience requirements, the final step in becoming a certified FMP is the successful completion of the certification exam. The exam, developed by a professional test development company, includes questions in five categories: operations, accounting/finance, marketing, administration and human resources.

The exam includes almost 200 multiple choice questions testing an applicant's knowledge of everything from responsible alcohol service to correct food temperatures to cost-control procedures. Results of the three-hour test are revealed only to the applicant.

The FMP test will be administered in groups by a certified proctor and graded by the Educational Foundation. Currently, tests are scheduled to be given on July 23 in Houston, Texas; on August 5 in New Orleans at the Louisiana Foodservice and Hospitality Exposition; and at the California Restaurant Association Show on August 10 in Los Angeles.

The Educational Foundation also plans to offer the test year-round at its Chicago office and at as many as 30 state association shows throughout the year. Schools offering the Foundation's Diploma Program will also be sponsoring group exams. The Foundation has available a six-month schedule of exam dates, and more testing dates and sites will be added each month.

Although preparation for the exam is not required, the Foundation provides several review options. A review notebook, which gives an overview of the five management areas and incorporates sample questions, can be obtained at an additional cost of $50. In addition, review sessions will often be offered on the morning of the test date.

If an applicant fails the exam, he or she is provided with a test analysis indicating possible improvement areas. A maximum of two retests are allowed for each applicant.

Once certified, FMPs can include their FMP designation on business cards, stationery and other identification. Foodservice Management Professionals also receive an FMP lapel pin, a certification plaque and a news release so that local press and corporate offices can report that they have earned the designation.

Maintaining FMP status

Certification of a foodservice manager is valid for three years. The Educational Foundation requires that FMPs remain abreast of changes in the industry through continuing education, professional development activities, industry involvement and work experience.

During these three years, the FMP acquires points towards recertification. The points are gained through involvement in activities that increase and update an FMP's professionalism and job knowledge. A $65 recertification fee is required along with the appropriate documents. ❑

Pat DiDomenico is a communications specialist at the National Restaurant Association.

The FMP program in a nutshell

□ *The program:* Foodservice Management Professional (FMP) certification promotes professionalism in the foodservice industry by certifying foodservice professionals who have reached a high level of excellence. The program is offered through the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association.

□ *Eligibility requirements:* Certification is available to currently employed, full-time foodservice unit managers, multiunit managers and corporate executives responsible for foodservice operations; foodservice management educators; and corporate trainers responsible for management training. All applicants must have at least three years of management experience and meet certain education requirements.

□ *Certification procedure:* Once education and experience criteria are met, applicants reserve a time and location at which to complete the 200-question certification exam. Review courses and a review notebook with sample test questions are available for test preparation. Successful completion of the program earns the applicant FMP status for three years.

□ *Cost:* Application fee: $100. Certification fee: $150 ($100 for hospitality educators). Recertification fee after three years: $65. Optional certification exam review book: $50.

□ *Application information:* Contact the Certification Department of the Educational Foundation, 250 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60606. Or call (800) 765-2122.

Getting Ready for the ADA

WELCOMING DISABLED CUSTOMERS

In the second article of a two-part series, operators discuss ways to make customers with disabilities feel welcome. Sometimes it's as simple as increasing staff awareness.

by Jennifer Batty

The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities reports that there are 43 million persons with some form of disability in the United States. The recent passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is giving these people a stronger voice in the consumer world.

Many people with disabilities are regular restaurant customers—or potential customers. Consequently, following the provisions of the ADA (when they go into effect in January 1992) will be beneficial not only from a legal standpoint, but from a business standpoint.

Some forward-looking foodservice professionals have already increased their levels of accommodation or are seeking ways to improve it in anticipation of winning over this growing segment of customers.

Raising awareness

Persons with disabilities often have two types of barriers to overcome. Physical obstacles are obvious. But just as deterring as a steep flight of stairs may be the attitudes of servers. The quickest adjustment an establishment can make is to raise the level of awareness among its staff members.

Kim Beasley, director of architecture and barrier-free design at Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) in Washington DC, says that attitudinal problems in service are often a result of a lack of knowledge among servers. "Many of the problems in service result from education problems with the waitstaff," says Beasley. The key is having a waitstaff that is tuned in to customers with disabilities.

"Part of regular foodservice training should be interacting with persons with disabilities so staff members will be better prepared and less anxious when waiting on those who are disabled," suggests Beasley.

The Loews Anatole Hotel in Dallas, Texas, recently found that tuning in pays off. Management at the hotel wanted to make sure that staff members would properly serve the 6,388 attendees at the "From ADA to Empowerment" convention held by the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities this past May.

Salma Gottfried, director of public relations and advertising for Loews Hotels, put together a training program for the hotel's employees with the help of the Texas Rehabilitation Commission (TRC), based in Austin, Texas. In all, 14 training sessions were held for the 400 to 500 employees who would come into contact with the convention attendees. The front-line employees included waitstaff, bellhops, managers and front-desk personnel.

The training sessions featured videotapes supplied by the TRC that covered such situations as how to check in a customer who is deaf or blind. "The tapes made our employees more comfortable in dealing with the attendees who were disabled and raised their levels of sensitivity to disability in general," says Gottfried.

Two of the Loews Anatole's eight restaurants offered buffet-style service, which is often not convenient for those with disabilities. Gottfried had the buffet tables moved to a more accessible level for people using wheelchairs and also provided runners who could carry trays to and from tables and fill up plates for those unable to access the buffets.

For guests who were visually impaired, Loews Anatole put the menus of each of the eight restaurants and room service into Braille.

Kudos and repeat visits

Making the effort to accommodate customers with disabilities can win an operator kudos and repeat visits not just from those with disabilities but from nondisabled persons as well.

The owners of the three Montgomery Inn at the Boathouse restaurants in Cincinnati, Ohio, understand that one positive experience of a customer with disabilities is probably the best form of advertising, says executive vice president Evan Andrews.

All staff members of the restaurants are given guidelines on how to serve persons with various disabilities, and they are instructed to extend the same courtesy and effort to all patrons.

"We have one young lady who is blind who now comes in about every two weeks to eat. The first time she came here, we asked her how we could best serve her. She told us where she wanted her coffee cup and plate, etc. We did such a good job that now when she comes in she brings in other people who are blind with her," says Andrews.

Photo courtesy of The Seeing Eye, Inc.

Taking care of patrons with special needs is often just a matter of educating the restaurant staff. For instance, staff members should know that guide dogs are allowed to accompany their masters into restaurants.

"I wish we'd done it sooner"

Mazzio's Pizza, a 262-unit operation based in Tulsa, Oklahoma, decided that its current home-delivery service was not quite up to snuff because it was missing out on a big chunk of potential customers—those with hearing impairments. "We found out that there are approximately 45,000 people in the Tulsa County area who are hearing-impaired. We decided we needed to find a way to better serve them," says Greg Lippert, vice president of marketing for Mazzio's.

To allow customers who are hearing-impaired to order a pizza without having a hearing person order for them, Mazzio's added a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) to its system earlier this year.

Tulsa-area customers who have a TDD in their homes can type in their pizza orders directly to the main delivery number, and the unit closest to them will deliver their order.

"These people are just like you and me. There are days when they're at home and it's raining or snowing or miserable outside, and they don't want to go out and pick up something to eat. You and I could just pick up a phone and order a pizza, but before we implemented this system it wasn't that easy for them," says Lippert.

Since adding the TDD service, Mazzio's has received letters from organizations for the deaf thanking them for their efforts. "When you consider the cost of the equipment (which was about $1,000) and the training time, compared with the amount of people you can reach and the benefits to our image, it is really worth it," says Lippert. "I wish we had done this sooner, because it's the kind of thing that makes you feel good when you go home at night."

Environments that welcome

The physical adaptations that will be required by the ADA have made many restaurateurs a little apprehensive. Although some operators may be required by the ADA to remove some barriers, many others will be able to provide a greater level of accessibility for their customers through adaptations that require more creativity than cash.

"The main issue here is providing the services available. If a person can take advantage of these services with a degree of dignity and independence, then the restaurateur is fulfill-

ing a big chunk of his part of the bargain," says Ron Mace, president of Barrier Free Environments, Inc., a design and consulting firm in Raleigh, North Carolina. Mace himself is a post-polio wheelchair user.

Mace and other consultants suggest that operators speak with accessibility experts when considering altering their establishments. They also recommend checking to be sure an architect understands the building codes and laws governing accessibility before turning one loose to redesign or design a restaurant. "It is going to become common practice to design buildings to be accessible. Architects in the past haven't been taught to design this way. That is all going to change," says Mace. Independent-living centers around the country and persons who are disabled are excellent sources of information, he says.

Major difficulties for persons with mobility impairments are changes in levels and clearance space. "Often you can rearrange the furniture to create more aisle space for the person," says Mace. Some restaurants use flip-out steel ramps to transport a wheelchair user up or down a few steps. Adding grip rails beside stairs and marking the leading edges of stairs will be helpful to patrons as well.

Changes made to accommodate those with disabilities often end up being useful to staff members as well. For example, better lighting in restaurants for those with visual impairments may also help reduce slips and falls by employees.

If a restaurant has hanging plants or other protrusions, Beasley suggests that they have rounded corners. If possible, protrusions should be placed below waist level so that they can be felt with a cane. Public-use items such as telephones should be moved down to wheelchair level.

Accessible design

Some operations are currently building or retrofitting in order to more fully accommodate customers with disabilities. Many have found that the cost involved is worth the gains they

Guidelines for serving persons with disabilities

The easiest accommodation an establishment can make for patrons with disabilities is providing service that shows sensitivity. Be honest when you are confronted with an unfamiliar situation and tell the person who is disabled that you are unsure about the best way to serve him or her. Your honesty and willingness to learn could gain you a loyal customer.

Here are some specific service techniques that will help staff members better serve those with disabilities:

Serving customers who have hearing impairments

1. A hearing impairment is often a subtle condition. Alert staff members to look for clues that someone has a hearing loss (such as a failure to respond to a verbal request).
2. To get the attention of someone with a hearing impairment, tap the person on the arm or use a hand motion. Do not shout.
3. Some persons with hearing impairments can lip read, so face them directly while speaking slowly and distinctly.
4. For those who do not lip read, offer a pad of paper and pen so that the person may communicate with you through writing.
5. Seat people who use sign language in a well-lit area.
6. Try not to seat persons with hearing impairments in noisy areas or in large, open spaces. Sound will reverberate more in these areas, making hearing more difficult.
7. Alert your staff that there are now assistance dogs for people with hearing impairments.

Serving customers who have visual impairments

1. Greet a customer who has a visual impairment in a normal tone of voice, identify yourself and ask whether the person wants assistance to a table. If the person does want assistance, offer your arm. Warn the person of any level changes, steps or congested areas as you walk.
2. If you do not have Braille menus, or if the visually impaired person doesn't read Braille, offer to read the menu (including prices) to the person.
3. Seat persons with visual impairments in well-lit areas or provide pen lights for better viewing of menus.
4. As you come and go from the table, always announce your arrival and departure. Remember to check on customers with visual impairments frequently, since they cannot see where you are to attract your attention.
5. When you bring an order to the table, ask the visually impaired person whether he or she wants you to explain the location of the food. If the person says yes, explain the location of the food using clock-face directions. An example would be, "Your wine is at 1 o'clock, your chicken is at 3 o'clock and the vegetables are at 8 o'clock."
6. Make sure staff members are aware that guide dogs are allowed by law to accompany their masters into restaurants. Do not pet, feed or distract the dog.
7. When giving change to customers with visual impairments, separate the bills by denomination and count the money out as you hand it to them.

Serving wheelchair users and customers with mobility impairments

1. Do not start to push a person's wheelchair. Ask whether he or she would like assistance before giving it.
2. Do not seat someone with a disability in an out-of-the-way place. Do seat the customer in a place with plenty of aisle space.
3. Make sure that there are accessible tables in both the nonsmoking and smoking sections.
4. Persons who have had a stroke or have a condition such as cerebral palsy may not have good muscle coordination and may have difficulty speaking. Ask whether these customers would like their food cut up before it is served, and give them straws to drink their beverages. Do not automatically assume from their behavior that they are intoxicated and cannot be served alcohol.
5. Do not assume just because people have physical disabilities that they are mentally impaired as well. Do not act condescendingly toward any of your customers, including those who are disabled.

Photo courtesy of PVA

The passage of the ADA and a greater awareness of the needs of people with disabilities are prompting wise operators to make their establishments more accessible. Wider aisles, better lighting and thoughtful service are among the accommodations being made.

plan to reap in a more-positive public image and better-satisfied customers.

The Montgomery Inn at the Boathouse restaurants' level of service to those with disabilities has already won the operations many loyal customers over the years. But managers at the family-owned operations, which specialize in barbecued ribs, were also determined to make the physical surroundings welcoming.

The original 1951 location was retrofitted in the early 1970s and again in 1985 to bring it up to date with building codes. The second restaurant was built all on one level with full facilities for the disabled. But the third location is the one of which Evan Andrews is most proud. "It is a two-level restaurant with an elevator for those with disabilities or for older guests. We designed a promenade that winds around the front of the steps for wheelchair access that is on a very gradual incline in a serpentine shape," says Andrews.

There is one small flight of stairs over which staff members can put an 8-foot aluminum ramp in a matter of minutes, and plenty of maneuvering space is available in the dining rooms. "I have had comments from diners in wheelchairs about how easy it is to move around here and how lovely the entranceway is," says Andrews. "We probably could have designed the building without some of the features we added to accommodate our guests, but we don't do anything just to get by."

Access for all members

The St. Petersburg Yacht Club, a private club in St. Petersburg, Florida, is being rebuilt to be completely accessible to all its members. The original building was built in 1909 and has been added to over the years. Jonathan Toppe, executive vice president and principal of the architectural firm Harvard, Jolly, Marcet & Associates, took on the task of bringing the establishment up to code in every way.

"I am a member of the club, and I was familiar with some of its physical limitations," says Toppe. "It was accessible, but it required that a person with disabilities go a roundabout way

Nelan receives award from White House

During the National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago, an award from the White House was presented to A. Philip Nelan, a 13-year employee of the association, for his work in fostering employment opportunities for the disabled community.

In addition, four corporations and a placement facility received awards from the National Restaurant Association for setting new standards in employing people with disabilities. The companies recognized were ARA Services, Pizza Hut, Ponderosa Steakhouses, Radisson Hotels International and Elwyn, Inc.

A. Philip Nelan, known to most as "Brother Philip," receives his award from Jean Mahoney of the White House.

The Chairman's Award was presented to Nelan by Jean Mahoney, a staff member of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. Nelan is an 85-year-old Christian Brother who became the association's director of employment of the handicapped in 1978. In this capacity, he runs the Projects with Industry program, which promotes foodservice industry involvement with those with disabilities and the placement of these individuals into the work force.

"I am stunned at receiving this award. I might possibly walk on air," said a pleased Nelan, who is known as "Brother Philip" by colleagues and friends.

Nelan spoke briefly about the tremendous strides the foodservice industry has made in employing those with disabilities. "Of the 6 to 8 million persons with disabilities, there are a great many who are out of work or without the training to be employed and would welcome the chance to become independent and productive again. We are trying to give them that chance," said Nelan.

Public accommodations and the ADA

Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is designed to guarantee disabled persons access to public accommodations. In one of its simplest forms, it requires private businesses to make their premises accessible to disabled persons. In other more detailed provisions, businesses that undertake alterations to their facilities or new construction have specific requirements that must be met to ensure equal access for the disabled. This act will greatly impact the hospitality industry. Generally, the ADA's public-accommodations requirements become effective on January 26, 1992. Small businesses will be given more time to comply.

The general rule of Title III of the ADA is an all-inclusive prohibition of discrimination against disabled persons.

> No individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations of any place of public accommodation by any person who owns, leases (or leases to), or operates a place of public accommodation.

As specifically stated in the last half of this general rule, the legal obligation is imposed not only on the business owner, but also on the landlord in situations where the business owner leases the business premises.

The list of the types of businesses covered by the ADA is not limited to "public accommodations" in a traditional sense. For example, retail stores, banks, homeless shelters and schools are all covered by the ADA. Virtually all of the businesses under the umbrella of the hospitality/tourism industry are included as public accommodations. The public-accommodations provisions of the ADA apply to inns, hotels, motels, other places of lodging (unless owner-occupied), restaurants, bars, travel services, museums, parks, zoos and other recreational facilities. Private clubs, religious organizations and places of worship are exempt from the ADA.

To avoid discriminating against disabled persons, the ADA requires businesses to provide "integrated settings." That is: "Goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages and accommodations shall be afforded to an individual with a disability in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the individual." For example, disabled persons cannot be relegated to an obscure corner of the dining room in restaurants. In some cases, satisfying the requirements of the ADA will be relatively simple. In dining areas, for example, the layout of tables will need to be altered to accommodate the width of a wheelchair.

The ADA requires that businesses eliminate eligibility criteria, policies, practices and procedures that discriminate. Structural barriers that discriminate against disabled persons must be removed as long as these changes are "readily achievable." Such changes are "without much difficulty or expense." Lowering telephones and adding ramps are examples of changes that are likely to be considered "readily achievable."

Businesses are not required to change criteria, policies, practices and procedures if doing so fundamentally would alter the service provided. In determining whether a particular change is readily achievable, a number of factors will be considered, such as the nature and cost of the change, and the nature and financial resources of the business involved.

New construction and alterations

When new construction or alterations are undertaken, the ADA requires the work to be done in such a way that the premises are "readily accessible to and usable by" disabled persons. There are two exceptions to this requirement. The first is that the requirements of ready accessibility and usability need not be met in situations where it is "structurally impracticable." Second, Title III of the ADA does not require the installation of elevators in buildings with fewer than three stories or less than 3,000 square feet per story (except in cases of shopping centers and the offices of health-care providers).

Recognizing the potential costs of these requirements, enforcement of the ADA's public-accommodations rules will be phased in. They will first be applied to larger businesses, while smaller businesses have more time to come into compliance.

—Linda K. Enghagen, J.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Hotel, Restaurant and Travel Administration
University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

to get into the building. They wanted to give all the members equal access."

The way Toppe has designed the new building, dining rooms will be completely accessible, ramps will lead into the main entryway and an elevator will take people to the second-floor dining room. All the restrooms have been redone with new stalls and special sinks dedicated for use by those who are disabled.

"You have members who range in age from college age up to older people. We also have a lot of active sailors in the club who are sometimes on crutches," says Toppe.

There has been a change in the attitude of building owners in recent years, notes Toppe. "When the public-access laws were first enacted, there was this mindset of, 'Well, we have to do this, so let's do it as cheaply and as easily as we can.' Nowadays, there's a perception that the law is a valid one and is here to stay, so you should make the adaptations as attractive and innovative as you can. It is becoming a better situation," says Toppe.

Opportunities, not obstacles

Savvy foodservice professionals who recognize the economic opportunities gained by providing access to as many customers as possible will be ahead of the game when the ADA goes into effect. ❑

More information about the ADA is available from the U.S. Department of Justice. For example, fact sheets about the ADA's requirements and a booklet entitled "The Americans with Disabilities Act: Questions and Answers" are available free of charge. Restaurateurs may be especially interested in finding out about tax benefits arising from expenditures made for the purpose of coming into compliance.

Contact the Office on the Americans with Disabilities Act, Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice, P. O. Box 66118, Washington DC 20035-6118. Or call (202) 514-0301 (voice) or (202) 514-0381 (TDD).

Jennifer Batty is a communications specialist at the National Restaurant Association.

THE 1991 SHOW
A CELEBRATION OF FOOD AND HOSPITALITY

The 72nd annual National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show rolled into Chicago on May 18–22, attended by foodservice professionals from all over the world. The spirited energy of the Show and the animated shop talk heard throughout the five days showed renewed confidence in the economy and the health of the industry.

Putting behind them the uncertain times associated with war and recession, the hospitality industry's finest gathered in Chicago to find the business-building ideas and contacts that will help improve profitability in the coming year.

The heart of the five-day event was the Show floor at the McCormick Place convention center on Lake Michigan. As usual, the Show floor was a gigantic marketplace of ideas, filled to the rafters with more new products and trend-setting ideas than the average person could see in a week.

A number of trends were evident at this year's Show. Operators and suppliers displayed an unprecedented level of interest in and awareness of the environmental effects of products aimed at restaurateurs. Nutritional concerns, too, were addressed in a big way, as food manufacturers marketed a host of food products for restaurateurs wanting to add healthful menu items. Also prominent were ideas and products aimed at bringing back the basics of good service.

And the Show was a time of discovery. A special treat this year was the American Culinary Classic, an international culinary competition that gave thousands of Showgoers a look at some of the world's finest chefs creating artful food under pressure. With dozens of seminars and management clinics taught by industry leaders at the Show, attendees also left Chicago with notebooks full of ideas for improving their establishments.

Finally, this year's Show was a time for celebration. Music filled the air at special evening events, broadcaster Larry King brought laughter to a packed house of listeners and the association toasted the inauguration of a new president.

Restaurants USA witnessed both the discovery and the celebration, and on the following pages we bring you some of the highlights of the 1991 Show. ❑

HURST WRAPS UP YEAR WITH ENTHUSIASM

"He has spent his year committed to education and enhancing the image of our industry," said National Restaurant Association Convention Committee Chairman Joe Fassler as he introduced outgoing President Michael E. Hurst before his farewell address on the Show's opening day. Education and image-building certainly were prominent on Hurst's agenda during the past year, but as he summarized his year as president, he spoke of much broader goals.

Association President Michael E. Hurst removed his coat and tie to reveal a "We're glad you're here!" T-shirt during his opening-day address.

Hurst's presidency occurred during a difficult year. War, recession and falling consumer confidence gripped the nation. The industry also struggled against many other problems, including a growing labor shortage, governmental intervention and environmental issues. But even in the face of such adversity, Hurst remained optimistic about prospects for the hospitality industry's future. "We are the fastest-growing industry and the largest new employer," Hurst told the crowd at the Arie Crown Theatre. "It's exciting to be in the foodservice business. This is where the action is."

And Hurst loves action. His presidency was marked not only by concern for problems but by solutions.

Hurst focused his year of leadership on three key areas: "playing to win" in government affairs, his "celebration of education" program and the resurgence of the "We're glad you're here!" campaign. "We made a good beginning," said Hurst, summing up his year in office but he rated his accomplishments as only about 25 percent complete, reminding listeners that there is still a long way to go. And he gave them the key to doing it: "Communication is the single most important leadership tool there is," he said. "That's how we get our message across."

Communication figured prominently in Hurst's approach to government affairs. He tried to take government involvement and lobbying back to the local level, involving the people who can make the difference. "We've done a good job on defense" as an association, said Hurst, recognizing the role the association has played in stopping the passage of harmful legislation. "But we need to do better on offense." Hurst applauded recent proactive association strategies, such as the promotion of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) as an alternative to a higher minimum wage and the association's dedication to environmental issues, including the formation of an environmental task force and increased coverage of ecological topics in association publications.

Communication was also central to Hurst's "celebration of education" program, which included meetings with hundreds of teachers, guidance counselors and administrators across the country. The program encourages educators to inform their students about careers and opportunities that the foodservice industry can offer.

Broadcaster Larry King entertained the opening-day crowd with humor and insight into subjects ranging from politics to the restaurant business. "I'm a restaurant person," said King.

The industry will be challenged in the coming years to "attract the brightest students when there's a demographic shortage," said Hurst. Now is the time to get involved. "The leaders of your industry understand that education is where it's at," he said, commenting on the industry's support of the Educational Foundation endowment. And he encouraged all restaurateurs to meet with and support schools, teachers, guidance counselors and students.

One four-word phrase—"We're glad you're here!"—sat at the core of Hurst's agenda this year, and the phrase remained close to his heart throughout his presidency. Hurst brought these words, and the smile that accompanies them, back to the industry's heart as well at the Show. "This is not just a yearlong promotion," said Hurst. "It's what hospitality is all about." The slogan has become synonymous with superior service and gracious hospitality—exactly what customers crave. "Never was a phrase so vital," said Hurst, referring to the rocky economic times of the last year. And to make his point once again, Hurst revealed that beneath his coat and tie was a "We're glad you're here!" T-shirt, showing just how close to his heart this slogan remains. ❑

AN INAUGURAL CELEBRATION

The National Restaurant Association has a new president. John R. Farquharson, president of ARASERVE, was honored at the association's Grand Banquet during the Show.

Entertainment at the banquet was provided by the Four Tops, who crooned their biggest hits to a receptive audience, including the new president.

THE ENVIRONMENT: GREATER AWARENESS, LESS RHETORIC

Exhibition booth #3364 had a bold message for restaurateurs passing by. "Consumers are beginning to comprehend the power that they have to vote for the environment at the cash register," read the three-foot-high lighted sign, surrounded by images of forests and streams. This exhibitor, J.G. Clark/Southfield Carton, a packaging manufacturer, knew just how to reach its customers. Environmental awareness—of both the current situation and the future—is no longer a fad. And customers of all kinds, restaurateurs included, have acknowledged the solid-waste problems and are bent on solutions. More than ever before, Show attendees this year were well versed on environmental issues. They seemed eager for practical answers and guidance, not rhetoric.

Few exhibitors failed to recognize this higher level of awareness, and they catered their presentations to this new breed of restaurateur. "The kind of question we receive is more informed and more educated," said Terry Beal, a Show exhibitor and a regional sales manager for Genpak Corporation, which manufactures a variety of packaging materials including polystyrene foam. "The public is more aware, for example, that polystyrene is not all bad and that paper is not always the answer," he said. "People know about the landfill problem and that terms like biodegradability don't mean what they used to mean."

Laurie Jennerjohn Hinch, a new-business development manager for Chesapeake Consumer Products Company, agreed. "Concerned customers are growing in numbers every day," she said. "They are more educated about the environmental situation now, and as they grow more educated, they become concerned on a deeper level."

Peggy Banks, a product manager for James River Corporation, noted a change in tone and temper among the attendees that passed her booth. "Restaurateurs seem much more informed about the whole issue," she said. "Last year they seemed to be focusing against particular facets, like foam products. This year everyone is tuned in to the bigger picture."

The packaging controversy

Packaging is perhaps the most controversial environmental issue facing the foodservice industry, as anyone walking the Show floor could tell. Most packaging manufacturers (paper and plastic) dealt with environmental questions up front through signage, literature and demonstrations. Exhibitors and their displays spoke to a more educated audience, using terms like "CFCs" and "post-consumer waste"—terms that have only recently become commonplace.

In light of this new level of awareness, education and cooperation became the common theme among packaging manufacturers. The Foodservice & Packaging Institute (FPI) and the Polystyrene Packaging Council—two associations organized to further the interests of the packaging industry—were at the Show, providing answers to operator and exhibitor inquiries. FPI offered a four-color brochure entitled *1991-92 Guide to Solid-Waste Solutions for the Foodservice Operator,* and the Packaging Council provided easy-to-read question-and-answer sheets that covered everything from a simple definition of polystyrene to a complex discussion of CFCs.

Show exhibitors catered their presentations to environmentally aware restaurateurs.

Individual exhibitors also tried to clear up misconceptions about their products. Genpak Corporation offered a leaflet entitled *Foam Packaging: Fact or Fiction?* Mobil Chemical Company's booklet *Polystyrene Foam and the Environment* dealt with "perceptions" versus "realities." A number of booths, including those of James River and Mobil, displayed foam products at various stages of recycling: from cup to pellet to new recycled item. Such displays made plastics recycling a tangible reality for people at the Show. "Last year we were virtually attacked for promoting polystyrene," said James River's Peggy Banks, "but this year it's a quite different tone."

In addition to answering questions and explaining complex issues, exhibitors were eager to help operators plan and implement recycling programs. Nearly all of the major packaging companies offer consulting and guidance to their customers through toll-free numbers, literature and on-site instruction. "We're very concerned with educating our customers on recycling," said Genpak's Terry Beal. "We like to work on a grass-roots level, such as schools recycling their cafeteria trays." James River Corporation's Banks noticed that restaurateurs are as willing to learn as the manufacturers are to teach. "We've noticed a lot more willingness on the part of customers," she said. "They really want to be part of the solution."

New angles on recycling

This year's Show floor offered committed restaurateurs a variety of solutions. The three Rs—reduce, reuse, recycle—were combined and expanded into many new practical solid-waste management programs.

Solutions ran the gamut from the simple to the technologically complex. Some companies encouraged restaurateurs to buy in bulk—thereby eliminating excessive and redundant packaging. Scott Paper Company's booth, for example, recreated a restaurant restroom with towel and tissue dispensers to show that bigger products in less packaging, combined with metered dispensing, could lead to less waste (less wrapping and less core material).

Simplicity was also central to several new recycling developments, as manufacturers scrambled to make waste reduction as palatable as possible. Mobil unveiled a new polystyrene-collection station that eliminates the need for employees to sort plastics by type. The collection station helps customers do the sorting by of-

fering separate slots for different products, including cups, plates and lids.

Hobart Corporation—an equipment manufacturer—demonstrated how its waste pulper could help cut waste volume. Attendees watched as a two-foot by four-foot cardboard box disappeared down a water channel and reemerged chewed down to a watery pulp a fraction of its original size. The pulper accepts all kinds of trash except bottles and cans.

"An operator can reduce solid-waste volume by 75 to 80 percent immediately," said John Vollette, a region manager for Hobart. The pulper has been on the market for nearly 20 years and has been, according to Vollette, "a quiet seller." But the market has changed. "In the last 12 to 18 months sales have been climbing," said Vollette.

Some exhibitors promoted advanced levels of recycling and recycled products. Wisconsin Tissue, which has been manufacturing 100 percent recycled products for years, proudly displayed its new recycled line, known as Second Nature. These paper products are made from recycled material that includes a percentage of post-consumer waste (as high as 40 percent in towels).

Wisconsin Tissue also decorated the walls of its exhibition booth with colorful party linens from its sister company, Chesapeake Consumer Products Company. The rainbow of colors erased any fear that recycled materials produce dull, gray paper full of wood chips. "It's easy to get a wide variety of pastels from recycled materials," said Hinch. "Recycled definitely doesn't mean dull."

Fuel from plastics

Many manufacturers and recyclers continued to look forward to technology for solutions. One such solution unveiled on the Show floor was Central Fine Pack's MCP process, which enables restaurateurs to condense plastics on site and, as special products manager George Barker said, "take 15 to 20 percent of their waste out of the waste stream immediately." The condensed blocks are collected and broken down into a powder used for fuel.

To use the MCP process, operators collect plastic waste and load it into the MCP machine, where it is mixed with hot vegetable oil. The plastic melts and floats to the oil's surface, since the two substances do not mix. The melted plastic then accumulates in a molding box where it is formed into a compact block. Once a certain amount of blocks is collected, they are shipped to the Central Treatment Plant where they are converted into either liquid or solid fuel that can be used to heat buildings and drive generators. "The end product contains no sulfur, no nitrogen and no chlorine," claimed Barker.

Packaging exhibitors at the Show were eager to help operators plan and implement recycling programs.

According to Barker, the MCP system offers many advantages to restaurateurs, both practical and environmental. First, it eliminates much of the time and labor involved in plastics recycling, for no sorting is required. "This machine takes any and all thermoplastics," said Barker, "from polystyrene foam clamshells to OPS lids and straws. There is no separating, no washing. You don't even have to remove the paper labels." All foreign matter, such as paper and foodstuffs, separates out during integration with the hot oil; only the plastics rise to the surface. Second, and perhaps more practical, such a waste reduction lowers trash volume and hauling fees. Environmentally, the MCP system provides both a new source of energy and a market—albeit a small one—for used cooking fats.

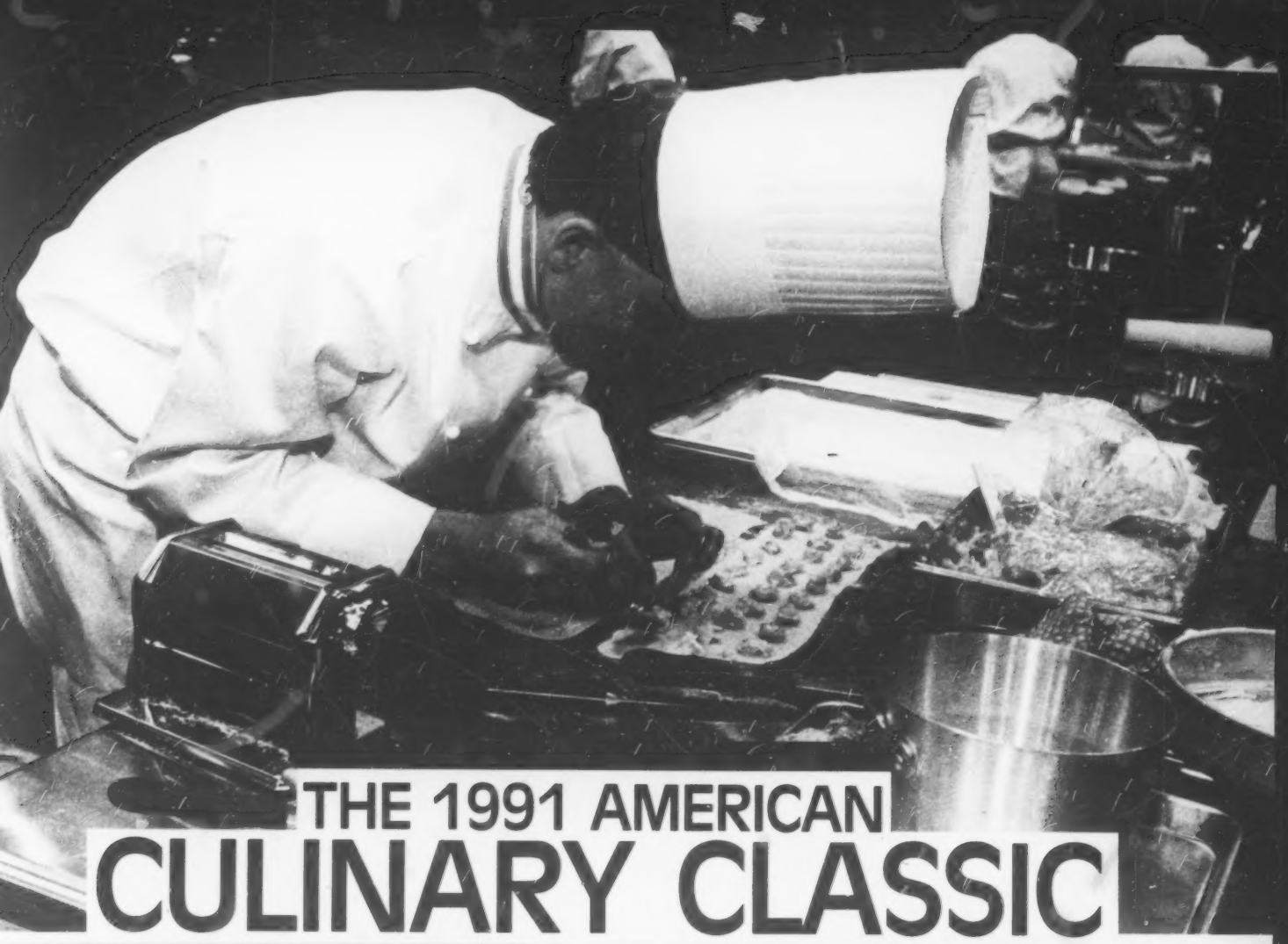
Back to basics

For many companies, however, technology did not necessarily hold the answers. Keyes Fibre Company (makers of Chinet table accessories) advanced its recycling process by moving back to the basics—and back to the earth itself—through composting. Composting is the controlled biological breakdown of biodegradable waste, including food and paper waste. The end product resembles soil or humus, which can be added to the soil to improve its properties, much as peat and mulch are used. Keyes Fibre believes that composting, long used as a solution for disposing of yard and garden waste, will become the "new" safe and practical commercial method for controlling solid waste.

Reusable tableware marketers, always well represented on the Show floor, adopted an environmental slant this year as manufacturers promoted their products as the earth-friendly alternative to disposables. On May 20, a new foodservice association, the Foodservice Coalition for a Better Environment, held its first official press conference, announcing itself as a new environmental watchdog and information source for restaurateurs.

The group, spearheaded by Ecolab and Hobart Corporation, is composed of 16 members representing companies whose primary focus is reusable products such as china, glassware and serviceware. The group's main objective is to promote the benefits (ecological and economical) of reusables and to serve as an information source and consultant to restaurateurs concerned about the environment.

The coalition is involved in several research projects, including a joint effort with the Rochester Institute of Technology that produced a cost-comparison model between disposables and reusables that restaurateurs can use to see how the two compare in their particular establishments. The group has also planned a "cradle to grave" study on the environmental impact of both reusables and disposables, and a feasibility study on the use of on-premises reusable ware in fast food units. "We know we can impact the fast food market," said Ecolab's Rem Laan. "It's just a matter of seeing where changes can be made." ❑



THE 1991 AMERICAN CULINARY CLASSIC

A true highlight for Show attendees this year was the sight of chefs from all over the world competing in the American Culinary Classic—in glass-enclosed kitchens set up right on the Show floor at McCormick Place. Knives flashed, steam hissed, and pots and pans clanged as chefs worked against the clock to create plates of masterful perfection. Operating on little sleep and much adrenaline, this year's competitors displayed spirited and artful food presentations that pushed the boundaries of culinary competition.

by Jennifer Batty

Chefs from 15 nations pitted their culinary skills and creativity against each other at the American Culinary Classic held during the National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago. After four days of heated competition witnessed by thousands of Show attendees, the team of chefs representing Germany emerged victorious. Canada, Switzerland and the United States finished second, third and fourth, respectively.

The Classic is one of the major international competitions that helps prepare chefs for the event commonly known as the "Culinary Olympics," to be held in Frankfurt, Germany, in October 1992.

Teams of master chefs at the American Culinary Classic competed in two areas: cold food and hot food. Although the cold food competition offered onlookers a chance to marvel at the artfully prepared food, the hot food competition is thought to be the "true" test of culinary skill. "The hot food competition separates the men and women from the boys and girls," said Baron Galand, one of the American Culinary Classic judges and a senior adviser and foundation director for Team USA.

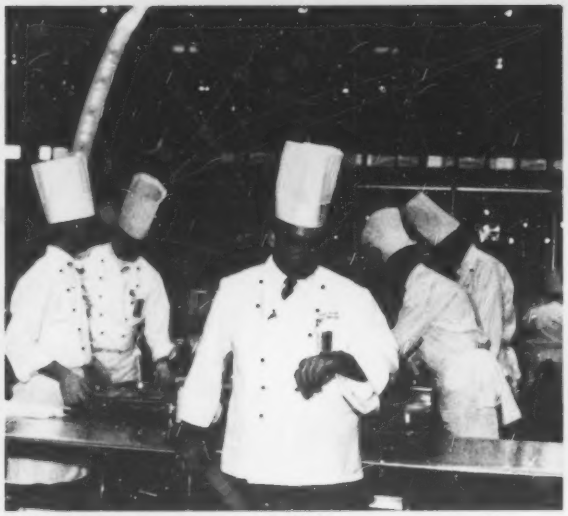
Mystery baskets

The day before each team was to compete in the hot food competition, the team was given a mystery basket of ingredients. An hour after receiving the basket, the team had to submit a menu to the judges. This menu had to include an appetizer and/or soup, a complete main course, a salad and dessert.

At their hotels that night [illegible] etitors were allowed to [illegible] the *mise en place*—as much preparation as possible without cooking the food. The chefs began cooking the food at 7 a.m. the next morning. By 11:30 a.m., they had to have 80 complete meals ready to present to judges.

In the hot food competition, teams were judged on the taste, presentation and nutritional aspects of the food, as well as on the *mise en place*. The day of the competition, the judges watched the teams in action

Thousands of Show attendees watched the Culinary Classic action in the glass-enclosed kitchens.



Keith Keogh, manager of Culinary Team USA, checks the time as his team races against the clock.

inside the kitchens to see how they worked under pressure.

Each day, four teams took over the glass-enclosed kitchens at McCormick Place and made them their own for the day. The chefs brought their own satchels and briefcases full of irreplaceable cooking equipment: a knife that slices vegetables perfectly, a whisk that's never failed or an odd-shaped cup that always comes in handy.

Little time for sleep

The Classic was both a physical and a mental challenge. It wasn't enough that these teams had to work on a few snatched hours of sleep and prepare meals for 80 people in a set amount of time. In addition, the food had to be perfect, the chefs had to work well together, the work space had to be scrupulously clean and waste had to be kept to a minimum. And, of course, teams had to cook with hundreds of curious faces pushed against the glass walls enclosing their kitchens.

That's enough to make even the best chef's toque droop. "We're in the public light every day," said Fred Zimmerman, a member of Team Canada. "The chefs who compete here are used to performing under extreme pressure. The team members must be able to concentrate and shut out any distractions so that they work together smoothly."

Jostling for a view

Show attendees were drawn to the action by the tempting smells wafting from the kitchens, the smoke and steam that billowed toward the ceiling, the noise of clanging pots and the frenzied action from behind the glass walls.

Many of the people jostling to get a better look at the teams in action were chefs, culinary students or people considering entering the field. Hubert Schmieder, chef/instructor in the Restaurant, Hotel and Institutional Management Department at Purdue University, was one of the attendees maneuvering for a better view. Schmieder was a member of the U.S. team in 1964, and he attended the Show this year to watch the competition.

"Competitions such as this put chefs in the limelight," said Schmieder, adding that it attracts young people to the profession. "They see all these beautiful presentations, and they see that chefs must also be artists."

"This is an art form"

Each day, several teams participated in the cold food competition. These competitors were picked up from their hotels at 3 a.m. so they could begin to set up the elaborate food displays at 4 a.m. The displays had to be completed by 8 a.m. for the judging at 8:30 a.m.

The teams had much more time to prepare the food for display in the cold food competition than in the hot food competition and were able to let their imaginations guide their hands. "In the cold food competition, the visual aspect is all-important: presentation, originality, new ideas—this is an art form," said Galand.

Judges for the Culinary Classic noted several trends in the cold food displays: smaller portions of meat, the use of more legumes and plant protein, smaller portions of food per individual serving and many platters arranged in a Far Eastern style.

"We look at the composition on the plates. It has to make sense. If a plate has all softs—food that has been ground up—there is not enough texture there. For me, there must be something with a bite to it," said Galand. "The plates must also make sense nutritionally."

The judges also scored the cold food presentations on practicality—an area that has grown more and more important over the years. "We critique platters for the chefs after the judging," said Galand. "If something is labor-intensive, we would say to the chef, 'If you were in a restaurant, you would need five extra people to prepare this for your customers,' " he said.

Practicality is even more important in the choice of ingredients. "When we see a team using truffles that cost $900 a pound, and they put $60 worth of truffles on one plate, then we point out that they would have to charge $180 for that meal in a restaurant in order to make a profit. Who is going to pay that?" asked Galand.

A taste of home

Many of the presentations incorporated foods indigenous to the competitors' homelands. Team Singapore

A panel of international judges evaluated plates on both taste and presentation.

Chefs Keith Coughenour and Michael Russell prepare hot food in the Culinary Team USA kitchen.

Many attendees snapped photos of artful food displays, such as this presentation by the Singapore team.

used eel and stingray. Team South Africa prepared a Zululand lamb specialty, and Team USA prepared a turkey platter for its cold food display.

Singapore, one of the gold-medal winners in the cold food competition, used many traditional items like fans, musical instruments, eating utensils and dragons to decorate their table.

The Austrian team and Team USA both brought the outdoors indoors to the competition. The Austrian team covered its display table with a blanket of grass and displayed a fountain in the middle with a small rock pool.

Team USA brought a topiary sculpture all the way from Disneyland to grace its cold food display table.

Cold food controversy

Team USA's towering topiary and food displayed on plain white plates (instead of fancy china and silver) were a departure from normal displays at such competitions. In a daring and controversial move, the U.S. team also put out food from its cold food display for the judges to taste. "We made everything fresh, and we wanted the judges to grasp our cold food presentation not only from its visual appeal but from the actual taste of the food," said team manager Keith Keogh.

The cold food tastings put out by the American team were not allowed to be counted in the judging. "Sometimes when you spring this stuff on people, they aren't ready. It was a bit radical, but I think it is a tremendous idea. I like it," said Galand.

The attempt was well received by most of the judges. "They are trying to show that the food not only looks good but that it tastes good as well. Although Team USA will not receive credit for initiating the idea in today's judging, they will get credit in culinary history," said Classic judge Hans Bueschkens.

Each day of the Classic, gold, silver and bronze medals were placed next to the competing teams' names on a board in front of the competition area. On the fourth and final day, observers noted that there seemed to be a tie between four teams, each with gold medals in the cold food and hot food competitions. Until the evening awards ceremony held at the Field Museum of Natural History, no one but the judges knew who had emerged victorious.

As proof of the high quality of competition, the top four teams overall were less than one point apart in their scores. Germany achieved a score of 36.95, Canada scored 36.93, Switzerland scored 36.48 and the United States scored 36.38. ❑

Jennifer Batty is a communications specialist at the National Restaurant Association.

U.S. team places fourth

Although Team USA did not take the top slot at the American Culinary Classic, the team did receive gold medals in both the cold food and hot food competitions. Team manager Keith Keogh was pleased with the team's performance in the Classic. "We put out everything new that we could," said Keogh, "and we knew that some of it would be taken well and some of it wouldn't. We wanted to get all this feedback before the Culinary Olympics so we took our chances on our home turf."

As a result of their daring, Team USA got a much stronger evaluation from the judges than the more conservative teams did, said Keogh. "We had some things that we thought were outstanding—like the topiary and the white plates without any silver—that they didn't like. We were keeping economics in mind for many of our choices, and the judges told us they don't take that into consideration, as far as the settings. They don't think that far away from the food itself," he said.

Since the competition, Team USA has reevaluated some of its plans for the Culinary Olympics, which take place in Frankfurt in 1992. "We got out of the competition exactly what we wanted. These strong critiques caused some philosophy changes," said Keogh. "We got more feedback from the judges, so I think we profited the most. If that is true, it will be seen in Frankfurt."

Culinary Team USA is sponsored by the U.S. Culinary Team Foundation, under the auspices of the National Restaurant Association and the American Culinary Foundation.

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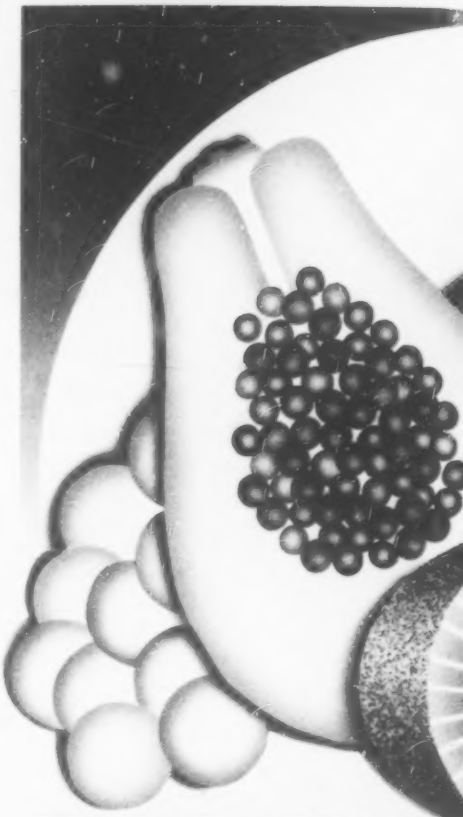

DISCO

Summertime is a great time t
With their eyes on both
chefs are moving fruit clos

by Jay Solomon

In the theater of the culinary world, fruit is about to take center stage. Always the understudy, never the star, fruit is finally achieving a billing on the menu marquee equal to that of perennial stars such as beef, chicken and fish.

Fruit adds succulence, natural sweetness, nutrients and texture to a whole genre of innovative and healthy dishes. Citrus-grilled swordfish, pork loin with peach mustard, sauces infused with apricots and plums, and salads tossed with berries, papayas and mangoes are bursting onto menus.

Fruity entrees

This is the perfect time for fruit-inspired entrees. Many customers (and chefs) are searching for wholesome, unpretentious and value-oriented meals. Dishes prepared with grapes, apples, peaches, bananas, pears and other popular kinds of fruit are a welcome reprieve from the spectacle of Belgian endive, salmon mousse and baby carrots. Simple but elegant, fruit entrees are the cure for anyone with a lingering culinary hangover from the nouvelle cuisine bash of the 1980s.

Sauteing sliced fruit with the main entree is a quick and easy way to add tang to a meal. Tarragon chicken with apples has been one of the most popular items on my menu for years. Chicken is sauteed with apples, cashews and tarragon, and then simmered in a mustard cream sauce and tossed with pasta. The apples impart a warm, aromatic flavor to the dish. Pears, nectarines or peaches can be substituted for the apples.

Citrus fruit and fruit juices make penetrating marinades. Although lemons and limes have long been used in fish marinades, other juices (such as grapefruit, orange, pineapple and cranberry) team up well with vinegar, soy sauce and Worcestershire sauce for strongly flavored marinades. Japanese-grilled steak, for example, is marinated in soy sauce, mirin (sweetened sake), pineapple juice, cranberry juice, ginger and garlic. This marinade can also be used with chicken or fish.

Fruit adds zest, texture and color to tossed salads and dressings. Apples, pears, pineapples, grapes and blueberries can be chopped and added at the last minute with spectacular results. Tropical fruits, such as mangoes, papayas, star fruits, pineapples and kiwis, enliven a salad of mixed greens. Vinaigrettes prepared with peaches, plums, nectarines or raspberries transform an ordinary tossed salad into a delectable and colorful first course.

Diced fruit also reinvigorates a variety of luncheon salads. Chicken, tuna and pasta salads are greatly enhanced by crunchy apples, pears, grapes and dried fruit such as raisins, dates or apricots. Today's sophisticated customers will find a salad of chicken, pear and walnut more enticing than the standard chicken salad fare.

Fruit has never been a stranger to the dessert list. Many menus, however, could use a jolt of inspiration. Beyond apple pie and cherry tart, fruit can offer a twist to the dessert plot.

CITRUS-GRILLED SWORDFISH

Serves 4

Ingredients:
1 cup orange juice
1 cup grapefruit juice
½ cup dry sherry
¼ cup lime juice
1 Tbs. fresh thyme leaves
¼ tspn. cayenne pepper
¼ tspn. salt
1½ lbs. swordfish steaks
1 Tbs. paprika

Method:
Combine the citrus juices, sherry, thyme, cayenne and salt in a shallow baking dish. Add the swordfish and refrigerate for 4 hours. Turn over the steaks after 2 hours.

Preheat the grill until the coals are gray to white.

Remove the fish from the marinade. Lightly oil the grill and place the fish over the heat. Lightly sprinkle paprika over the fish. Turn after 5 to 7 minutes. Continue grilling for 5 to 7 minutes more or until the fish is opaque in the center.

Remove the fish, place on warm plates and serve immediately.

—Courtesy of Jay Solomon

Nutritional analysis per serving: 366 calories, 44 grams protein, 17 grams carbohydrate, 9 grams fat, 334 mg. sodium, 86 mg. cholesterol

Mango cobbler, pineapple and coconut crisp, peach sorbet, and blueberry shortcake are some inviting options. Many kinds of fruit are interchangeable in desserts, so you're only limited by your imagination.

As with vegetables and herbs, it is important to match fruit with the right ingredients. Citrus fruit is best paired with fish and shellfish. Semi-sweet fruit, such as apples, nectarines, peaches, bananas, plums, apricots and grapes, complement mild chicken and pork entrees. Extremely sweet fruit, such as strawberries, raspberries and watermelon, should be

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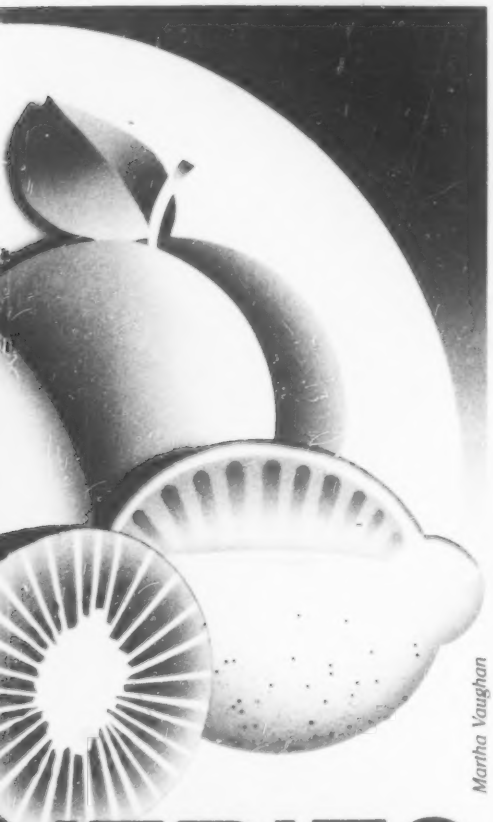


Martha Vaughan

VERIES

add fruity dishes to your menu.
menu trends and food cost,
r to the center of the plate.

complemented with a tart fruit or vinegar. Firm, sweet-and-tart fruit, such as green apples, mangoes and pineapples, are the most flexible. As with any new creations, it's a good idea to sample the fruity entrees yourself or with your staff.

Promoting and purchasing

Fruit is easy to describe and merchandise. Envision an orchard in your backyard and use bountiful, lively language: succulent Maine blueberries, plump and juicy peaches, rosy California nectarines, glistening grapes, plums bursting with flavor, crisp New York apples, exotic Florida mangoes and Hawaiian coral papayas. One doesn't need a thesaurus to describe nature's juicy morsels in an irresistible way.

The nutritional aspects of fruit should also be trumpeted. Fruit is high in vitamins, minerals and dietary fiber, and is low in calories, with negligible sodium and fat. Leaving the peel on most fruits maintains their nutrients and texture—and leads to less waste and labor.

Purchase fruit that is ripe, unbruised and wrinkle-free. Fruit should exude a fruity bouquet. Be aware that color does not always indicate ripeness. Rather, it may reflect variety. If possible, feel fruit for ripeness and blemishes.

Some fruit will ripen in storage; other kinds will only ripen in the garden. Unripe peaches, plums, nectarines, mangoes and bananas will ripen in a paper bag over a few days at room temperature. Apples, pears, oranges and grapefruits ripen on the tree. Most ripe fruit is optimally stored in the refrigerator—bananas, of course, being the exception.

Although most types of fruit are now available year-round, for menu planning and cost considerations it's a good idea to know the optimal seasons. The stone fruits (peaches, nectarines, plums and apricots) are most readily available from May to late summer. Apples and pears peak in autumn. Cranberries peak around November, but are one of the few kinds of fruit that maintain their freshness even after freezing. Berry season runs from spring until early late summer. Mangoes are abundant from April through early summer. Some fruits are readily available throughout the year. These include grapes, oranges, bananas, apples, pears, grapefruits and pineapples. Consult your produce distributor for more detailed seasonal listings.

Seasonal means reasonable

Incorporating fresh fruit into the menu will also contribute to a lower food cost. Most kinds of fruit, especially those in season, are very inexpensive. In most markets, one banana costs 10 to 15 cents, peaches and nectarines cost around 30 cents, and a pint of strawberries or blueberries costs just over one dollar. Granted, prices fluctuate throughout the year, but relative to other ingredients on the menu, fruit is a great deal.

With a little creativity, homework and inspiration, fruit will have a dramatic impact on your restaurant clientele. Although once destined for the backstage roles of garnishes and fruit-and-cheese plates, fruit is now attracting the spotlights. ❑

Jay Solomon is the chef and owner of Jay's Clinton Hall Cafe in Ithaca, New York.

TARRAGON CHICKEN WITH APPLES

Serves 5

Ingredients:
8 ozs. uncooked linguine or angel hair pasta
2 Tbs. butter
1½ lbs. boneless and skinless chicken breasts, diced
2 apples or pears, sliced, unpeeled
1¼ cups raw, unsalted cashews
1¾ cups light cream
½ cup Dijon-style mustard
2 to 3 tspns. dried tarragon

Method:
Place the pasta in boiling water to cover and cook according to the package directions or until just tender, stirring occasionally. Drain the pasta and chill under cold running water. Set aside.

In a large skillet, melt the butter over medium heat and add the chicken breasts. Cook for 4 to 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add the apples and cashews and continue to cook for 2 to 3 minutes more, or until the apples are soft and the chicken is white in the center. Continue to stir.

Stir the cream, mustard and tarragon into the pan and bring the mixture to a simmer. Cook for about 1 minute more, and then thoroughly blend the pasta into the mixture. Cook for about 1 minute more or until the pasta is steaming.

Remove the pasta to 5 warm plates and serve with warm bread.

—Courtesy of Jay Solomon

Nutritional analysis per serving: 889 calories, 55 grams protein, 50 grams carbohydrate, 54 grams fat, 505 mg. sodium, 220 mg. cholesterol

by Joan E. Herlong

BRINGING HOME THE BAKING

Adding a bakery to the restaurant isn't easy, but for some operators it has brought the aroma of success.

If the current shortage of qualified bakery and pastry chefs is an accurate indicator, then fresh-baked goods must be "hot." Many restaurants are finding that homemade breads, rolls and desserts can be a marketing tool for bringing in more business and heating up sales.

"We're a seafood restaurant, but now we're equally well known for the quality of our freshly baked bread," says Tom Ponzini, director of planning and product development for Gaido's restaurant in Galveston, Texas. Gaido's built on its long-standing reputation as a seafood restaurant by adding fresh-baked goods to the menu in 1985. "Most of our positive comments center on bread and desserts. Customers now say our bread is a reason to come back," says Ponzini.

On-premises baking has the marketing potential to help a restaurant make more dough, but it is not an expansion to take lightly. Just as baking itself takes time, training and patience, branching into on-premises baking requires those things plus capital to avoid getting burned in this highly competitive market.

Benefits of baking your own

One of the greatest advantages of doing your own baking in the restaurant is bringing the aroma of baking on site. Customers are often lured to an establishment by the heady aroma of fresh-baked breads and desserts. "Just the smell of the bakery instills a certain ambience of healthy, hearty, wholesome foods," says Michael Franks, co-owner of Misto Caffe and Bakery of Torrance, California. Freshly baked goods from the retail bakery in Misto Caffe lend a certain cachet to the restaurant, says Franks. "It creates an energy, and it's a great marketing angle."

Schlotzsky's, a chain of 240 sandwich restaurants based in Austin, Texas, bakes its own whole wheat and sourdough rolls from scratch daily. Director of franchise services Darrell Kolinek says on-site baking provides a great marketing effect.

"The aroma of bread baking brings freshness to mind and keeps it there for the customer," he says. "The customer thinks, 'If the bread is fresh, then everything else must be fresh, too.' We make it clear to the customer that we bake it there from scratch. They can see all the raw ingredients up front, and the response is positive across the board."

Kolinek adds that on-premises baking also lends itself to extensions of the menu: "Doing our own rolls allows us to try out other bread types, and we're even branching into pizza dough. Now we serve pizza during certain hours."

Larry Mindel is chairman and chief executive of Il Fornaio America Corporation in San Francisco, which now includes Il Fornaio Cucina Italiana, a combination bakery/cafe in Corte Madera, California. Mindel says that baking from scratch helps build a reputation for quality, attention to detail and tradition. "Our bread is baked from very old recipes originally developed in Italy, and we're known for that," says Mindel. "Great bread is a very important part of great restaurants today."

Baking's bottom line

On-premises baking can also make bottom-line sense for operators who run efficient kitchens. As Tom Ponzini of Gaido's points out, "The price of bread has risen much faster than the price of raw ingredients in the past few years. The more raw product used, the greater the purchasing power. Our efficiency in the kitchen is much better now than when we started out baking. We've realized benefits not just in terms of costs but also in the quality of our breads."

Darrell Kolinek of Schlotzsky's surmises that "it's probably cheaper to bake the rolls our way [from scratch], because we can haul all our bulk ingredients without refrigeration costs. But even if we found that it wasn't cheaper, we wouldn't change. We firmly believe it's the best way to go."

Before donning a baker's hat, a restaurateur should remember that operating a bakery is not the same as running a restaurant. For some restaurants, on-premises baking is an effective marketing tool but not necessarily a profit center. Larry Mindel of Il Fornaio argues that the transition to on-premises baking is a difficult one: "A bakery is not a restaurant. It really is a separate business, and you have to be prepared to learn and manage a whole new business."

Establishing on-premises baking naturally demands capital. Mindel counsels that baking is labor-intensive, asset-intensive and rent-intensive because, in effect, you have to have a second kitchen for it. "Bakers' hours are weird, too," says Mindel. "It's easy to underestimate the labor involved."

On the other hand, Ponzini found the transition into baking at Gaido's was fairly easy. "Actually, I found that it was easier to develop this aspect of the restaurant than the restaurant itself," says Ponzini. "I don't think it's like a whole new business. It's a less tense environment, less high-pressured because you've got to allow yourself a lot of lead time for developing your product. It's not like dealing with the guest who wants his grilled fish right now."

Knowing the risks

Before branching into on-premises baking, it's important to secure a skilled baker—and there's the rub. Ron Wirtz, library director for the American Institute of Baking in Manhattan, Kansas, cautions, "Skilled cooks are not the same as skilled bakers. Even if restaurants were not getting into baking themselves, there would still be a critical shortage of knowledgeable bakers here and abroad."

Training your own staff in baking is a viable alternative to hiring a certified baker or pastry chef. But as Ponzini of Gaido's restaurant admonishes, "Training your own staff will demand a significant amount of time, effort and money."

Wirtz demurs when asked for even a guesstimate of a minimum capital outlay for on-premises baking. "Capital investment for on-site baking varies, depending on how serious you want to get," says Wirtz. "If you intend to bake from scratch, you'll need a trained baker, a mixer, proof cabinets, ingredients and storage areas for those ingredients." You will also need to allocate kitchen space for baking.

Baking equipment is expensive. Michael Franks of Misto Caffe and Bakery says, "We're talking $80,000 to $90,000 for equipment, and we're not even at full-strength capacity."

Although quality control is often one of the benefits of do-it-yourself baking in a restaurant, it can also pose a risk. Larry Mindel maintains that unless a restaurateur can fully commit to excellent on-premises baking, it's difficult to sustain consistent quality. "I went to a really nice restaurant a couple of weeks ago," Mindel relates. "It's not an inexpensive restaurant—a $100 dinner for two—but the guy had a very small on-premises baking operation. The bread was undercooked, and it was terrible. Why do that to a meal?" In other words, bringing the baking in-house adds one more variable to your menu.

Words of advice

To have a successful on-premises baking program in a restaurant, an operation must serve a sizable customer base. One rule of thumb is that at least 150 to 200 dinners per night must be served to support an in-house bakery.

"Do your homework," says Tom Ponzini of Gaido's, which serves more than 400,000 dinners annually. "Look into finding or training capable bakers or pastry chefs. Look into the cost of equipment, the cost of labor, the cost to train that labor, and the cost of your square footage devoted to baking. Research the market: Is there enough of a demand to make the investment pay off?"

"You need to have a plan," says Michael Franks. "We did our homework before getting into this. You need to design a kitchen that will meet your demand. A bakery really is a separate business, so you have to determine what your real market is."

Adding baking takes a long-term commitment. "It's not something to

Making your own bakers from scratch

Training your own staff in the art and science of baking is probably the best way to get around the shortage of qualified bakers and pastry chefs. A loyal employee already has an interest in seeing your business succeed and may appreciate the opportunity to learn more and become more valuable to the restaurant.

When management at Gaido's restaurant in Galveston, Texas, decided to start baking their own breads and desserts, "we had no experienced bakers and no knowledge of baking," says Tom Ponzini, director of planning and product development. "A pastry chef hired from outside would not have been a detriment, but we wanted to go about it our own way, at our own speed. We felt that the learning process would ultimately make us come out stronger in the end." So Ponzini went to school.

"I studied several books on baking, and Gaido's sent me to the American Institute of Baking for a three-week course covering all aspects of baking," Ponzini recalls. "We had already decided what we wanted to bake, so I had specific goals in mind. I came out of that with a better understanding of what equipment was needed. I also worked as a baker's apprentice, in addition to my regular work here, and I started experimenting with different items.

"Gaido's also sent me to cooking school in France for a year. When I returned, I began refining what we had already tried out and started adding new items. We had a lot of trial and error at first, but we knew that would happen. All this took place over the course of about two years."

According to Ron Wirtz at the American Institute of Baking in Manhattan, Kansas, baking courses can be as short as a week-long seminar (which can be very helpful in management's initial research phase) to as long as several years. Correspondence courses are also available. Extensive training is obviously more involved. Kansas State University, for example, offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in baking science and technology.

Here is a list of some institutions in North America that provide condensed to comprehensive training on all aspects of baking, from the actual preparation techniques to marketing and retailing:

American Institute of Baking
1213 Bakers Way
Manhattan, KS 66502
(800) 633-5137

Kansas State University
Department of Grain Science & Industry
Shellenberger Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506
(913) 532-6161

Camden County Vo-Tech Schools
343 Berlin Cross Keys Road
Sicklerville, NJ 08081
(609) 767-7000

Clark College
1800 E. McLoughlin Blvd.
Vancouver, WA 98663
(206) 694-6521

Contra Costa College
2600 Mission Bell Drive
San Pablo, CA 94806
(415) 235-7800

The Culinary Institute of America
651 S. Albany Post Road
Hyde Park, NY 12538
(914) 452-9430

Duluth Technical College
2101 Trinity Road
Duluth, MN 55811
(218) 722-2801

Dunwoody Institute
818 Dunwoody Blvd.
Minneapolis, MN 55403
(612) 374-5800

George Brown College of Applied Arts & Technology
Box 1015/Station B
Toronto, Ontario M5T 2T9/Canada
(416) 867-2000

Los Angeles Trade Technical College
400 West Washington Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90015
(213) 744-9500

Mankato Technical College
1920 Lee Blvd.
North Mankato, MN 56001
(507) 625-3441

Oklahoma State University
Hospitality Services Department
1801 East 4th Street
Okmulgee, OK 74447
(918) 756-6211 (x220)

Tom Ponzini shows off Gaido's pecan pie.

just 'try out' for a while," says Ponzini. "It takes two or three years to break even on your initial investment. Do you have the time to iron out the kinks in your operation and to wait to recoup your initial expenses? It took us three years to break even."

Once you have determined you have enough traffic and the right market to justify venturing into baking, the critical next step is to "find a good baker or pastry chef," says Franks. "Make sure you have the right chef before you even get into the equipment phase. Make your bakery chef a vested partner, or at least make sure that person is very well taken care of. Give them a vested interest in making the thing work."

Ron Wirtz of the American Institute of Baking concurs: "You need trained personnel before you get into equipment. If you cannot find a trained baker, you can always send a trusted, talented member of your staff to baking school. There are a number of schools that train bakers and pastry chefs across the country."

Assuming you have the volume, the market, the staff and equipment, the only remaining variable is what to bake. Lori Gray, owner of Cafe Creme de la Creme in Rochester, New York, advises beginners in baking to stay focused.

Gray's cafe serves light fare such as soups, sandwiches and signature dessert pastries featured prominently in a

glass display case up front. Word of mouth has made Creme de la Creme's pastries so famous that "many customers will go to another restaurant for a full meal, but then they come to us for their dessert afterwards," says Gray.

"Start small," says Gray. "Bake a few things very well rather than taking on too much at first. Do what you do best, but be sure you can do it. Don't overextend yourself. It's best to develop a signature product and then build from that."

"Specialize," exhorts Michael Franks. "I wouldn't touch cinnamon rolls or bran muffins for a million dollars. That's been done and done and done. If you specialize well, the world will make that trip around the corner and down the alley to find you." ❑

Joan E. Herlong is a freelance writer in Greenville, South Carolina.

BREADS AT THE SHOW: A HEALTHY SIGNATURE OF SERVICE

As the restaurant industry returns to the fundamentals of both food and hospitality, no one item fits as comfortably into both categories as bread does. A warm basket of rolls or a fresh-out-of-the-oven loaf on the table invites customers to relax, settle in and enjoy the meal that follows. It's a before-dinner gift, a symbol of hospitality.

Although bread itself is a simple and classic signature of service, the bread presented need not be simple at all. In fact, customers today are open to a wide variety of new and different tastes and textures in their breads. The Show floor revealed an enormous variety of shapes, sizes, textures and flavors to choose from. Many of the bread products featured at the Show allow restaurateurs to add a signature item without having to bake from scratch.

Breakfast breads, like biscuits and muffins, seem to be rising in popularity. Rustco Products Company unveiled its new muffin mix, which comes with a package of real fruit. Wheatland Farms (a subsidiary of Pioneer Flour Mills) introduced two new biscuit doughs and a new soft breadstick. Lender's Bagel Bakery promoted its new soft bagel, hoping to win over consumers who find traditional bagels too chewy.

Ethnic and regional breads were well represented at the Show. The Wheat Foods Council offered a booklet entitled *Ethnic is Now: Wheat Foods for the Industry's Cutting Edge*, which included several recipes from countries where breads play a major role in the daily diet. Offerings run the gamut from the familiar French brioches to the more exotic tijgerbrood or "tiger bread" from the Netherlands, Greek lavash (a lean cracker-like bread) and Tunisian terabelisi bread.

Exhibitors at the Show seemed well aware of the growing trend toward the exotic. Metz Baking Company unveiled its new European Whole Wheat Bread—a rounded loaf with a coarser texture and higher nutrient content than most white breads. Balducci Enterprises offered attendees a taste of its new rosemary *focaccia* bread. This Italian specialty is crusty on the outside, soft on the inside and lightly flavored with herbs.

New York Flatbreads showcased its flatbreads laced with flavors like garlic, onion and sesame—enough variety to please even the pickiest palate. Original American Scones of Chicago has developed a Yankee version of the British favorite, variations of which can include everything from apples and cinnamon to chile-pepper flavor.

Many of these new products are premade or partially made and frozen, to help operators deal with one of the industry's biggest problems—lack of skilled labor. Original American Scones quick-freezes its dough and offers scones both unbaked and prebaked. Wheatland Farms' new "superbiscuits" come premade, precooked and frozen. Rudi Foods Inc. marketed its "par-bake" method, whereby they bake the product 85 percent and then flash-freeze it before shipment. The restaurateur then bakes it the final 15 percent and serves it to the customer "freshly baked." Rich Products showcased its new Single Step Classics line of traditional and Southern-style biscuits, which are delivered frozen.

1991 SHOW

Back to the basics of nutrition

One reason for the proliferation of bread specialties is the rising interest in nutrients found in grains and grain products. A banner above the Wheat Foods Council's booth proclaimed wheat foods "the energy natural," and many other manufacturers showcased the nutritional benefits of their products.

Low-fat, low-cholesterol, fat-free and cholesterol-free items abounded. Rustco Products Company, for example, introduced a new fat-free pound cake. Golden Dipt/DCA offered new fat-free and cholesterol-free muffins aimed at restaurateurs, especially fast food operators, as well as a new low-sodium line of breaded coatings. Original American Scones offers a cholesterol-free alternative to its traditional cream scone. Lender's marketed its new soft bagel and other products as "good and good for you." "More people are looking to dissect products [nutritionally]," said Barry Ansel, executive vice president of sales and business development for Lender's.

Metz Baking Company is placing more emphasis on its whole wheat products, including a new brown 'n' serve whole wheat French loaf. On the flip side, Campbell Taggart Inc. (a division of Anheuser-Busch) is focusing on white bread—with a difference. Its new Iron Kids Bread line, introduced this past winter, features white bread with all the fiber, iron and nutrients found in whole wheat bread. Iron Kids Buns, based on the same principle, were unveiled at the Show.

As nutritional trends continue toward fat-free, high-energy foods and as service trends move back to the fundamentals of hospitality, bread and bread specialties will play a bigger and more vital role in restaurant dining. And as the Show floor revealed, restaurateurs will have a growing variety to choose from to fill this basic need.

—Melanie A. Crosby

No one attending the National Restaurant Association Show can make it to every booth and every event. For those who missed this year's Show, and for those who couldn't be everywhere at once, Restaurants USA brings you more highlights.

THE 21st ANNUAL CULINARY ARTS SALON

The trend was toward "simplified elegance" at this year's Culinary Arts Salon, the trendsetting annual display of culinary art at the Show.

The National Restaurant Association, in cooperation with the American Culinary Federation and the Chicago Chefs of Cuisine, held its 21st annual Culinary Arts Salon Competition at this year's Show. More than 200 chefs, apprentice chefs and students competed for awards in several categories: hot foods shown cold, cold foods, platters, desserts and centerpieces.

In his remarks at the salon's awards ceremony, Chef Mark Erickson, head of the judging committee for this year's salon, stated, "The overall quality of the show is better than it has ever been," adding that the annual salon always leads to more innovation.

This year's salon featured more seasonal and regional dishes. Erickson pointed out that many of the foods, including rabbit, asparagus and mushrooms, are commonly considered spring foods. He added that there was less emphasis on platters (which are part of the presentation), that portions were being downsized and that dishes presented were more practical than they have been in the past.

Stacy Radin, a certified pastry chef who judged the desserts presented in the salon, pointed out that even the desserts are moving toward what she termed "simplified elegance." Radin also noted that fresh fruits became more prominent in the salon as part of the move away from heavier, more extravagant sweets.

These shifts were perhaps most obvious in the display of Sylvia Joyce Hayes of Schoolcraft College in Livonia, Michigan, who received the Best of Show award for scoring the most total points in the competition. In what she herself termed a "risky presentation," Hayes displayed her own vision of an upscale picnic. The picnic tabletop featured chilled cucumber soup with smoked rainbow trout and fresh dill, a platter of Gulf Coast shrimp variations and an appetizer of lobster timbale with Southwest white-corn stew. As an entree, Hayes presented a boneless barbecued lamb riblet with summer grilled vegetables and polenta with chopped chile peppers. Her picnic display also included a straw hat, flowers and a pair of reading glasses to complete the scene.

Kerry Ellen Kelzenberg won two awards for her fanciful Mother Goose display in marzipan.

"I wanted to pull up a chair and eat"

The theme was obviously well received by the judges. Judge Mark Erickson said of the entry, "I wanted to pull up a chair and eat," adding that Hayes' display was "approachable" food, that it was well executed and was less showy than some other entries.

The Best Junior Culinarian award went to Jeffrey A. Wagers of the National Center for Hospitality Studies at

Chefs and other Show attendees perused the Culinary Arts Salon for innovative food displays.

Sullivan College in Louisville, Kentucky.

Four other competitors, along with Wagers, received judges' special awards. Two other junior apprentices, Jim Cason of Central Piedmont Community College (Charlotte, North Carolina) and Christopher Carl of Schoolcraft College, and two professionals—Leo Waldmeier of the Drake Hotel in Chicago and Dudley McMahon of the Woodstock Club in Indianapolis—were honored for outstanding work.

A special competition category this year was for works in marzipan. Robert Simon of Simply Elegant in Omaha, Nebraska, took first place and honors for the most original marzipan display for out-of-town professionals for his bust of a chef. Kerry Ellen Kelzenberg won first place and "most original" honors in the marzipan category for Chicago professionals for her Mother Goose marzipan display. The Hermann Rusch Award was awarded to Claudine Marie Nicosia of the Culinary School of Kendall College for her marzipan carousel horse. ❑

Congratulations to Donald Dettling of Gregory, Michigan. Dettling joined the association during the Show and came away with more than a membership. In a prize drawing, Dettling won a complete computer hardware and software system.

Pictured are representatives of the companies donating the prizes. From left: Bob Knouse, IBM; Ron Provus, CaterMate; Bill Schwartz, FOOD-TRAK; Aaron Sorenson, Great Plains Software; William P. Fisher, Executive Vice President, National Restaurant Association and Harold Barndt, IBM.

GADGETS GALORE
NEW TECHNOLOGY AT THE SHOW

The move toward a more mechanized restaurant was evident in the technology displayed at this year's Show.

The consensus of several suppliers was that labor control and cost control are becoming increasingly important to restaurateurs, thereby generating demand for time-management and cost-management software. Eatec Corporation, Fisher Restaurant Systems and FOOD-TRAK/System Concepts, for example, demonstrated systems that emphasize recipe costing and inventory control.

Computer companies were not the only group to show advances in technology. Sharp Electronics, for example, displayed a new microwave oven with a sensor to detect when foods have reached their optimum "doneness." The oven also features an "express defrost" that uses graduated power of 20 percent, 30 percent and 40 percent to prevent the cooking of food while defrosting.

The Intelli-Host Corporation of Granite Bay, California, drew Show attendees to its booth to witness an automated restaurant seating system. The self-contained system is designed to tell which tables are taken and which are available for seating. The system keeps track of seating times and number of table turnovers, and it will estimate the wait for a table for a given party size. Remote keypads allow those who bus tables to tell the hostess when a table has been cleared, so that empty tables are not allowed to stay empty while customers are waiting.

Inventor Jeff Hilliard unveiled his improved automated seating system at the Show.

Although the product was at the Show last year, Jeff Hilliard, the system's inventor, revised the product to do more things to meet the demands of restaurateurs.

Hilliard got the idea for the system after one maddening restaurant experience. "I saw 35 empty tables, there were 60 people waiting and four hostesses. We walked out," said Hilliard. He then went home and started working on the system. Interest in the product was high, as the booth was continually crowded. Hilliard added that the next project for the firm was to develop a similar system for hotel room service.

Other innovations on this year's Show floor included a pizza-vending machine and a microwave oven that reads UPC codes to determine cooking time. ❑

ALSO SPOTTED ON THE SHOW FLOOR

Not all of the innovations displayed at the Show were high tech. As always, some of the most clever ideas were found by roaming the Show's miles of aisles.

□ **Floppy Cup.** Three-and-a-half years ago, an inventor in Salt Lake City got tired of spilling drinks in his car and decided to do something about it. Several hundred unsuccessful models later, the Floppy Cup arrived on display at the Show.

The Floppy Cup is touted by the InoTec Corporation, the product's manufacturer, as the "first no-worry, no-hassle beverage container for the '90s." The cup is made of a flexible, durable material, reminiscent of that used in metallic helium balloons, giving the cup the ability to roll with the punches, so to speak. It begins flat and expands as it is filled with ice and beverages. There is a finger tab on the plastic top through which a string can be hooked, so that one person can carry several cups at once.

"The Floppy Cup is perfect for any foodservice business with a drive-thru or takeout. You can hook a string through it and take it to the beach or on a picnic," said Dale C. Gledhill, president of InoTec, as he slung a Floppy Cup full of water over his shoulder with no spillage.

A logo or other artwork can be printed on the cups.

□ **Thermal napkin.** Why didn't someone think of this before? A thermal napkin to be used in a bread basket to keep bread warm.

William Peery and Jack Smith of the Add Heat Company of Arvada, Colorado, have a motto: "A good chef's charm is keeping food warm"—and that's what their inventions do.

It took three years to roll out the product after Smith, who has a background in foodservice, came up with the idea. The Thermo Napkin is a washable, wipeable, stain-resistant, insulated napkin that helps to keep food wrapped inside it toasty. The two inventors have also created variations on the Thermo Napkin, with pockets for utensils and condiments and a Velcro closure that could be used for room service or delivery orders.

The no-spill Floppy Cup made its debut at the Show.

Next on the drawing board for Add Heat is a battery-powered breadbasket that will impart heat from underneath.

□ **Noise-canceling telephone.** It's Friday night, and your restaurant is packed, but you are still receiving calls for reservations. The problem is the caller can't hear you talk over the background noise, and you can't hear the caller.

At the Show, Walker Equipment Corporation of Ringgold, Georgia, displayed noise-canceling telephone handsets for noisy environments such as restaurants. NoiseCensor is designed to cancel out background noise so that the caller only hears the host or hostess, and it allows the restaurant employee to hear more clearly as well because of the adjustable volume control on the handset.

□ **Scan and win.** Mid-America Merchandising, Inc., specializes in offbeat promotional ideas. The company brought one of its traffic-building gimmicks to the Show, and it worked so well that traffic snarled into a knot in the aisle beside the company's booth in McCormick Place East.

On the corner of the brightly colored booth was a Scan and Win machine. As Show attendees passed by, they were given postcards with bar codes on them, which they ran through the machine. An electronic voice then told participants what prize had been won. Winners delightedly carried off brightly colored straws and tote bags, and one lucky person left with a cellular phone. ❑

FOUNDATION SALUTES BERNS AND STUDENTS

Industry leaders and more than 200 of the country's finest foodservice/hospitality students were honored during the fifth annual "Salute to Excellence" Banquet held by the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association during the Show in Chicago.

H. Jerome "Jerry" Berns of New York's "21" Club received this year's Thad A. Eure Jr. Ambassador of Hospitality Award in honor of his 52 years of commitment to the foodservice industry.

Before the banquet, a daylong student forum and a new faculty forum were held, giving both students and educators the chance to question foodservice professionals about the issues and challenges facing the industry. ❑

Jerry Berns of New York's "21" Club received the Educational Foundation's Ambassador of Hospitality Award. Pictured, from left, are Jack Laughery, chairman of the Educational Foundation; Jerry Berns; Daniel Gescheidle, president of the Foundation; and Ted J. Balestreri, first vice chairman.

JANE BRODY SPEAKS ON

FEEDING A FITTER AMERICAN

by Jennifer Batty

To some people, New York Times personal health columnist Jane Brody is a health guru. Others might consider her a nutrition fanatic. To an audience that included both types of listeners, Brody delivered a talk entitled "Feeding a Fitter American," during the Show in Chicago.

When Jane Brody was a skinny little girl, her mother put raw eggs in her milkshakes to beef her up. Over the years, Brody has almost completely eradicated eggs and other foods that she considers to be "greasy kid stuff" from her diet.

During her seminar on "Feeding a Fitter American," she did admit to a recent lapse in her stringent food ethics. In celebration of her 50th birthday, the day before her appearance at the Show, Brody indulged in a cheese omelet "just to show that I'm not a purist," she said.

Immediate past association president Michael E. Hurst introduced Brody to the packed auditorium, saying that she has been a "driving force in 'good' good food," and that she has lots of ideas to make restaurants play a more important role in customers' lives. Brody responded by saying that "the fact that I was asked to speak here shows that the restaurant industry is listening."

As she took her place on stage, Brody's petite form was barely visible behind the speaker's podium, but her voice was certainly heard as she spoke about the growing importance of health and nutrition in the foodservice industry.

People depend on restaurants

"Today, people can't make an exception to their diet everytime they eat out or get takeout food," said Brody. "Many people now depend on restaurants to keep them nourished, and restaurants must respond to their customers' health needs."

Brody shared some of her principles of healthful dining that are included in her six books on nutritious eating. (Her most recent book is *Jane Brody's Good Food Gourmet.*) The typical restaurant meal derives 50 percent of its calories from fat, Brody said, while the American Heart Association recommends a diet that derives no more than 30 percent of its calories from fat. Brody thinks that 20 percent of calories from fat should be the goal.

Much of the fat in our diets comes from the protein component of meals—such as the meat dish, said Brody. "Protein is essential, but we have been brainwashed about how much we need. Americans consume two to four times too much protein." She recommended that restaurateurs teach diners to expect more reasonable portions of protein items and to serve more of the health-promoting foods like vegetables, fruits and whole-grain breads. "Use meat as an ingredient instead of the focal point of the meal. I can make a gourmet meal using only two to four ounces of protein with dried beans and peas in a casserole," said Brody.

Flavor without fat

There is no denying that fat makes food taste good, said Brody, just as salt and sugar are also appealing tastes to many people. To enhance the flavor of foods, Brody said to use "time-honored flavorings like spices, vinegars, peppercorns, onions, garlic, lemon and lime. There are hundreds of herbs and spices you can use to enhance the flavors of food."

For those members of the audience who have watched the development of fat substitutes with guilt-free glee, Brody offered her own opinion that this easy answer is not acceptable. "I don't approve of fat substitutes. They perpetuate the desire for that taste," said Brody. Her philosophy is the same for sugar substitutes that encourage a dependence on that sweet taste.

According to Brody, the major emphasis of a restaurant meal should be placed on complex carbohydrates like fruits and vegetables. "These are the only foods that have never been linked to any health problems," said Brody. "About 65 percent of our calories should be derived from these foods, and they should be eaten in their original form" when possible, to retain the fiber content.

Brody gave restaurants a pat on the back for the number of fresh-fruit desserts offered. "But too often they come in syrup or with whipped cream or ice cream. Skip these fatty additions and be as creative with your fruit desserts as you have been with your salads," she encouraged the audience.

Brody also lauded the increased use of fish in restaurants. "Fish is an excellent restaurant choice. The natural oils in fish have healthy properties. But I'd like to see the fish served

without fatty marinades, and I'd like to see more steamed and poached entrees," she said.

Fulfilling customers' needs

Brody ended her lecture with an offer to answer questions from the audience—and hands flew into the air. The questions showed the attendees' concerns for fulfilling their customers' nutritional needs, as well as their personal curiosity about healthy eating. One member of the audience asked if Brody would like to see nutritional labeling on menus. She smiled slightly and said, "I doubt this is ever going to be a popular idea," and the audience laughed in response.

Brody encouraged restaurants to continue providing separate listings of healthy menu items and to expand this section of the menu. Those items that meet the requirements of an organization such as the American Heart Association could be designated on the menu, said Brody.

But one person queried, "If you pinpoint healthy items, does that make the other menu items look unhealthy?" Brody said she doesn't think so, as long as customers have the option of asking to have those other items prepared in different ways to make them healthier.

Brody also said that the waitstaff should be accurately informed about how dishes are prepared. "This is beneficial to both the restaurateur and the customer, because if a customer asks if a dish is fried and the waiter says it's not and then brings it out fried, then the customer will send it back. Likewise, restaurants should start serving sauces on the side and let the customer decide if he wants it on his food," she said.

Savvy restaurateurs will pay close attention to special requests for food preparation and demonstrate a willingness to comply with these requests, said Brody. "You are going to get more and more requests for entrees that are broiled or steamed and for sauces to be left off or put on the side. Be prepared to respond to these requests."

One audience member asked forlornly if those in the fast food segment of the industry were doomed, as the emphasis on healthier eating grows. Brody said that fast food restaurants will respond to nutritional needs just as they have responded to the demand for convenience and quick service.

"You don't have to serve just health food," said Brody. "There will always be some splurgers, and there are some things like fettucine Alfredo that will never be health food and shouldn't have to be. The key here is providing options." ❑

Jennifer Batty is a communications specialist at the National Restaurant Association.

EATING LIGHTER AT THE SHOW

Anyone who has attended the National Restaurant Association Show knows that tasting delicious food on the Show floor is a highlight. This year, attendees who dined a la Show were treated to lighter options than in years past.

A walk amid the miles of aisles this year revealed fewer fried foods, a heavy emphasis on breads, and a large number of lowfat, nonfat and sugar-free products that are new or nearly new.

Fewer fried food samples were evident, possibly due to consumers' concerns about fat in their diets. More roasters and rotisseries were present, illustrating that restaurateurs may be responding to customers who are looking for lower-fat meat preparations when dining out.

This year's exhibitors brought out numerous variations of frozen yogurt and other frozen desserts. Several companies featured nonfat and lowfat yogurt varieties. Along with a nonfat and sugar-free line of yogurts, Hawthorn Mellody also featured a soft-serve, nondairy frozen sorbet that is expected to be popular during the warm summer months ahead. The J.M. Smucker Company featured Fruitage, a frozen dessert made without dairy products and containing 99 percent fruit juice to give an intense fruity flavor.

Frozen desserts were not the only lowfat or nonfat products being shown. Simplesse, the recently approved fat substitute, was seen in at least two forms at the Show. One was in cheese to be used on pizza. The second form was as an ingredient in Eli's E'Lights Cheesecake. Both products were being touted as ways of consuming traditionally high-fat foods in nonfat or lowfat variations. Both booths were crowded with interested passersby seeking a sample of foods made with the fat substitute.

Heartland Food Products displayed a "guilt-free" cookie mix. The cookie is made from dried fruit and contains no butter, margarine or shortening. It also contains no whole egg—only egg whites. Despite its no-fat, no-cholesterol label, the product was met with some "no thank yous" from some Show attendees. Mary Steeb, a product developer for Heartland, said that many people who passed the booth were skeptical until they tried it, perhaps fearing that a cookie product without fat couldn't possibly taste good. Many tasters were won over after trying it. One gentleman remarked, "It tastes just like Mom's raisin cookies," while another attendee, a registered dietitian who works for Meals On Wheels, was particularly interested in the product's application for senior citizens.

In addition to these foodservice suppliers, one supplier more familiar for its retail product has made a surprising foray into foodservice and was a first-time exhibitor at the Show. The Slim Fast Foods Company Foodservice Division was touting ready-to-drink cans and single-serving packets of its popular calorie-controlled beverage. Slim Fast also promoted the use of its product in standard beverage dispenser units as a way to make large batches of the beverage that can then be dispensed in single servings. According to a spokesman for the company, "The line was 10-deep every day at the booth."

In addition to the numerous food products with a nutritional or health emphasis, there were at least two computer companies displaying nutrient-analysis software. The CBORD Group company and N-Squared Computing demonstrated products that provide restaurateurs the ability to analyze their recipes for nutrient content.

—Nancy Michalski

#118

The annual physical

Many organizations require executives in key positions to have an annual physical examination in order to get a reading on the overall state of the person's health. The rationale is twofold. First, there is the normal concern for the person as a human being. Second, catching a problem in the early stages can preclude expensive health and death claims—and the loss of a valuable contributor to the management team. A while ago I had a dream about the physical exam I was scheduled to take the following morning.

Doctor: Well, let's see now. Whoops! You can't be Mrs. Sippi. I must have the wrong file. Makes no difference though. Stop smoking, lose 10 pounds, cut your drinking in half, take an aspirin every day and get eight hours of sleep every night. That way you'll be feeling better in no time.

Me: Actually I'm here for an annual physical exam. I'm feeling fine. I don't smoke and never have; my weight has been steady for at least 10 years. I rarely drink, I rarely take pills of any kind, and I usually get 7½ to 8 hours of sleep every night.

Doctor: Physical exam, huh. Well, I'd better prescribe some high-blood-pressure pills as the first order of things.

Me: I don't think I have high blood pressure. I feel fine. I work out, and I don't feel flushed or look red in the face.

Doctor: It's just routine. Most of my patients experience high blood pressure when they receive my bill. By the way, what is your blood type?

Me: It's A-plus. Actually it's the only A-plus I've received in my life.

Doctor: Now look. This is my office, and I make the jokes here. Get that straight. Now open your mouth, and when I depress your tongue with this wood depressor, say, "Cheese."

Me: Cheese? Don't you mean that I should say, "Ahhhh"?

Doctor: No. Say, "Cheese." Anybody can say, "Ahhhh." I want you to say, "Cheese" so that when I take your picture on that X-ray machine you'll be in practice. Get it?

Me: You are going to check my eyes and ears, aren't you?

Doctor: I already have. You have two of each.

Me: Well I know that. But are they functioning as they should?

Doctor: I don't know. They're your eyes and ears. You tell me.

Me: Well, I think they're OK. I don't think I have any problems.

Doctor: Good. Keep thinking that way. Good physical health is mostly a condition of the mind anyway. So if you think you're fine, then you're fine.

Me: Well, I have noticed some peeling on my toes. I think it may be a touch of athlete's foot.

Doctor: I don't think so. You don't look like an athlete to me.

Me: Well, you know what I mean. I mentioned that I do work out, so I may have picked something up somewhere.

Doctor: Well, from now on, I don't want you working out. I want you to work in. You're not getting any younger. Besides, most work is a condition of the mind anyway. So just let your mind tell you you're working out, and you'll feel like you've worked out.

Me: Are those your golf clubs over there in the corner?

Doctor: Yes, I use them as both golf clubs and medical instruments. I was just about to get to them. I'm going to use this two-iron here to test your knee reflexes. So sit up on the table and let your legs hang down.

Me: Now wait a minute. I thought you used a little metal mallet to do that.

Doctor: I used to, but I'd only get a mild reflex reaction. I can *really* test your reflexes with this two-iron, and it helps me with my golf swing at the same time.

Me: Are you going to give me an EKG?

Doctor: No. When your secretary called to make the appointment, she said you were heartless. So there's really no reason to take an EKG.

Me: Oh come on, Doc. She was just kidding, I'm sure.

Doctor: I'm not so sure about that. She also said you were brainless and tasteless, so that makes it easy for me as the examiner.

Me: Well, Doctor, I hope she also said I was penniless, because I am with respect to you. Besides, being compensated is simply a condition of the mind. If you think you've been paid, then you've been paid, and you can go on about your way without worrying about it. Now inhale and hold your breath until I tell you to release it. Goodbye, Doctor!

Fisher's Law #118: Don't mess with your health or your health will be a mess.

Simplified Quantity Recipes

Nursing/Convalescent Homes and Hospitals

by Mabel Caviani and Muriel Urbashich

The recipe for basic, well-balanced menus

To order this classic cookbook, send a check for $29.00 (nonmembers, $37.70) to the Publications Department, National Restaurant Association, 1200 Seventeenth Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Mention order number FP783.

CREST* report—1991 winter quarter

Customer traffic advanced 1.0 percent in the winter quarter of 1991, compared with the same quarter of 1990. The advance, which follows a quarter of no growth in traffic, is above the gain posted in winter 1990 (0.8 percent) but lower than the traffic advance recorded in winter 1989 (2.1 percent).

Quickservice restaurants led the three segments in traffic growth in the winter quarter (December–January–February). Customer counts advanced 1.2 percent at quickservice restaurants, 0.4 percent at midscale restaurants and 0.3 percent at upscale restaurants, compared with winter 1990 levels. These traffic advances compare with 1990 winter-quarter traffic growth of 2.2 percent at quickservice, and traffic declines of 1.7 percent and 3.4 percent, respectively, at midscale and upscale establishments.

For the third consecutive quarter, breakfast showed the largest traffic advance among the three meal periods—up 2.9 percent compared with winter 1990 levels. Supper traffic grew a more modest 0.7 percent in the winter 1991 quarter. Lunch traffic declined 0.1 percent in the winter period, the second consecutive quarter of traffic declines.

On and off-premises highlights

After registering a year-over-year decline in the fall quarter of 1990, on-premises traffic posted a modest 0.7 percent increase in the winter quarter of 1991. However, this growth compares with a 1.0 percent decline in on-premises customer counts in winter 1990. Off-premises traffic advanced 1.2 percent in winter 1991. This strong growth comes on top of a 2.9 percent rise in customer counts in winter 1990.

Both quickservice (up 2.0 percent) and upscale (up 1.1 percent) establishments posted increases in on-premises customer traffic in winter 1991. On-premises counts at midscale restaurants declined 1.4 percent. Similarly, advances in off-premises traffic at midscale (up 12.9 percent) and quickservice (up 0.8 percent) eateries offset a decline in off-premises traffic at upscale restaurants (down 10.5 percent).

Two of the three meal periods recorded increases in on-premises customer counts. Both breakfast (up 5.9 percent) and supper (up 1.2 percent) posted advances in on-premises traffic, while on-premises counts slipped 1.2 percent at lunch. Off-premises traffic also advanced for two meal periods—lunch (up 1.6 percent) and supper (up 0.2 percent)—but declined at breakfast (down 2.8 percent).

Promotion use

The use of promotions continued to climb in the winter quarter. Promotions were used on 23.4 percent of occasions in the winter quarter, up from 22.4 percent in the winter of 1990 and 21.4 percent of occasions in fall 1990.

Promotions were used most often at quickservice restaurants, where they were used on 26.4 percent of all occasions, up from 25.8 percent in the winter of 1990. Promotions were less frequently used at midscale (17.3 percent) and upscale (16.9 percent) restaurants, but their use increased from 16.0 percent of occasions and 14.5 percent of occasions, respectively, in the winter quarter of 1990.

Promotions were most frequently used at supper (30.6 percent of occasions), followed by lunch (21.3 percent of occasions) and breakfast (18.2 percent of occasions) in winter 1991. This compares with winter 1990 promotion use of 28.4 percent for supper, 20.4 percent for lunch and 18.8 percent at breakfast.

Average check size

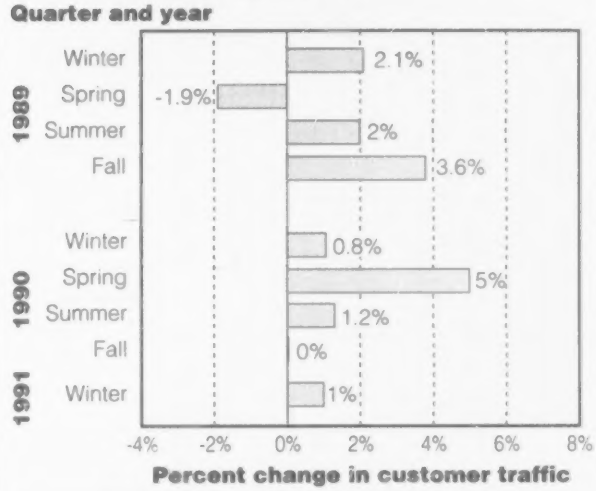
Average check size per person advanced 3.6 percent in the winter quarter of 1991 to $4.00 per person, up from $3.87 in winter 1990. Upscale establishments posted the largest growth in average check size, up 4.7 percent from $9.39 last winter to $9.84 in winter 1991. The average eater check advanced 4.5 percent at quickservice restaurants (from $2.87 to $3.00), while midscale establishments recorded a more modest 1.8 percent increase in average eater check (up from $4.70 to $4.79).

Among the three meal periods, supper checks grew the most, rising 4.5 percent from $4.90 in winter 1990 to $5.11 in winter 1991. Average checks grew by smaller margins at lunch (up 3.1 percent from $3.57 to $3.68) and breakfast (up 2.2 percent from $2.55 to $2.61).

—*Nancy Michalski*

Change in customer traffic by quarter* (winter 1989 to winter 1991)

Customer traffic advanced 1 percent in the winter quarter of 1991



*Percent change over same quarter, previous year

Source: NPD/CREST, *Quarterly Household Reports, 1989–1991*

*CREST stands for Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, *a diary survey of one of the NPD marketing and research companies.*

The foodservice industry 1989: a brief review

For the 22nd consecutive year, the National Restaurant Association has prepared information on the size and scope of the foodservice industry, including sales, purchases and unit counts for major market segments as well as alcoholic-beverage sales. The figures and analyses reported here provide a summary of the industry's performance during 1989. Complete tables follow on pages 38 and 39*

Foodservice industry sales reached $226.5 billion in 1989, up 6.0 percent from the $213.7 billion in sales posted in 1988. After adjusting for inflation, sales grew 1.2 percent. Real growth for the industry was below the advance in the real Gross National Product (GNP), which posted a 2.5 percent rise in 1989.

The proportion of the food dollar spent on food away from home continued to rise in 1989, reaching a record 43.0 percent—up slightly from 42.8 percent in 1988. The proportion of disposable personal income allocated to meals and snacks prepared away from home declined marginally from 5.54 percent in 1988 to 5.51 percent in 1989.

Menu prices, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for food away from home, increased at a slightly higher pace in 1989—4.6 percent compared with 4.1 percent for 1988.

Commercial Foodservice Group sales advanced 5.9 percent from 1988, reaching $200.4 billion in 1989, a 1.2 percent advance in real terms. Sales in the Commercial Foodservice Group represented 88.5 percent of all foodservice sales.

Within the Commercial Foodservice Group, **eating place sales** totaled $146.7 billion in 1989—up 5.9 percent from 1988. After adjusting for inflation, eating place sales in 1989 posted a 1.2 percent advance. Eating place sales accounted for 73.2 percent of Commercial Foodservice Group sales in 1989.

Foodservice sales at **restaurants and lunchrooms** totaled $72.7 billion in 1989, up 4.9 percent from 1988. In real terms, sales increased a slight 0.2 percent. Restaurant and lunchroom sales accounted for 49.6 percent of total eating place sales in 1989.

Sales at **limited-menu** (fast food) **restaurants** in 1989 advanced 7.1 percent, reaching $65.8 billion. In real terms, fast food sales grew 2.5 percent. Sales at fast food restaurants in 1989 captured 29.0 percent of total industry food and drink sales, nearly double the share they accounted for in 1970. Fast food sales contributed 44.8 percent of eating place sales.

Passenger and cargo liners posted the largest increase in foodservice sales among industry segments, advancing 15.1 percent. The cruise-line market continued to expand due to increased berth capacity and shorter, less expensive cruise options. Other segments that posted double-digit sales growth between 1988 and 1989 include community centers (14.1 percent), contractors at colleges and universities (12.5 percent), recreation and sports centers (12.5 percent), and gasoline service stations (10.3 percent).

Institutional foodservice sales advanced 6.3 percent in 1989, reaching $25.1 billion. Of the major institutional groups (employee, educational, transportation and hospital foodservice), transportation posted the largest gain, up 10.6 percent. All segments of institutional transportation foodservice posted strong gains—passenger/cargo liners, airlines and railroads. Healthy sales advances were also recorded by nursing homes and hospital foodservice.

Food and drink sales for the **Military Foodservice Group** reached $1.1 billion in 1989, a 5.9 percent advance. Foodservice facilities continued to be upgraded, and the number of U.S.-based troops on active duty increased.

Food and drink purchases for the foodservice industry reached $87.5 billion in 1989. Purchases in the Commercial Foodservice Group, which accounted for 73.9 percent of the total amount spent, equaled $64.6 billion for the year.

Percent change in foodservice industry sales, 1988–1989

	Current dollars	Real dollars*
Commercial Foodservice Group	5.9%	1.2%
All eating places	5.9	1.2
Restaurants, lunchrooms	4.9	0.2
Limited-menu restaurants	7.1	2.5
Commercial cafeterias	5.4	0.8
Social caterers	7.8	3.2
Ice cream, frozen custard stands	3.2	−1.4
Institutional Foodservice Group	6.3	0.7
Military Foodservice Group	5.9	1.3
Total foodservice industry	**6.0%**	**1.2%**

* *Adjusted for inflation*

Source: National Restaurant Association; Malcolm M. Knapp, Inc.

** The statistical information and analyses for the National Restaurant Association's study of the foodservice industry in 1989 were prepared in consultation with the research firm Malcolm M. Knapp, Inc.*

To order the report

Members of the National Restaurant Association may obtain up to five free copies of the detailed report, *Foodservice Industry: 1989 in Review* (publication CI700) by calling the association's Information Service and Library between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Eastern Daylight Time) at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960. Each additional copy costs $10. The cost to nonmembers is $20 per copy. All orders must be prepaid. Credit-card orders are accepted over the phone.

To order, send your request to the National Restaurant Association Publications Department, 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036.

Estimated food and drink sales and purchases, 1989

Number of units[1]	Type of establishment	Estimated food and drink sales (000) 1988	Estimated food and drink sales (000) 1989	Percent gain (loss)	Estimated food and drink purchases (000) 1989
	Group I: Commercial Foodservice[2]				
	Eating places				
160,859[3]	Restaurants, lunchrooms	$ 69,355,980	$ 72,726,986	4.9%	$ 24,960,920
146,271	Limited-menu restaurants	61,397,191	65,774,810	7.1	21,323,930
7,476	Commercial cafeterias	3,960,224	4,174,076	5.4	1,488,559
5,126	Social caterers	1,934,596	2,085,494	7.8	706,695
12,194	Ice cream, frozen custard stands	1,894,213	1,954,828	3.2	553,216
331,926	**Total—Eating places**	**$138,542,204**	**$146,716,194**	**5.9%**	**$49,033,320**
37,227[4]	Bars and taverns	$ 8,899,046	$ 8,952,440	0.6%	$ 514,810[5]
369,153	**Total—Eating and drinking places**	**$147,441,250**	**$155,668,634[6]**	**5.6%**	**$49,548,130**
	Food contractors				
	Manufacturing and industrial plants	$ 3,356,495	$ 3,668,914	9.3%	$ 1,557,087
	Commercial and office buildings	1,134,717	1,214,147	7.0	516,620
	Hospitals and nursing homes	1,436,074	1,566,756	9.1	568,654
	Colleges and universities	2,283,774	2,569,246	12.5	796,466
	Primary and secondary schools	1,056,638	1,136,942	7.6	467,880
	In-transit foodservice (airlines)	1,204,892	1,317,056	9.3	632,187[7]
	Recreation and sports centers	1,598,556	1,724,842	7.9	543,325
15,739[8]	**Total—Food contractors**	**$ 12,071,146**	**$ 13,197,903**	**9.3%**	**$ 5,062,219**
	Lodging places				
16,450	Hotel restaurants	$ 11,533,217	$ 12,215,486	5.9%	$ 3,811,842
1,825	Motor hotel restaurants	549,710	553,558	0.7	173,135
8,924	Motel restaurants[9]	850,081	836,480	−1.6	266,850
27,199	**Total—Lodging places**	**$ 12,933,008**	**$ 13,605,524**	**5.2%**	**$ 4,251,827**
	Retail hosts				
5,849	Drug and proprietary store restaurants	$ 330,357	$ 344,893	4.4%	$ 120,368
1,587	General merchandise store restaurants	46,857	50,418	7.6	17,293
4,980	Department store restaurants	874,752	925,488	5.8	322,995
3,692	Variety store restaurants	228,193	233,441	2.3	81,470
4,627	Food stores (except grocery)	228,874	249,244	8.9	75,521
44,499	Grocery store restaurants[10]	4,978,746	5,347,351	7.4	1,775,320
32,645	Gasoline service stations	1,380,732	1,522,947	10.3	505,618
8,518	Miscellaneous retail (liquor, cigar, etc.)[11]	536,518	570,855	6.4	180,961
106,397	**Total—Retail hosts**	**$ 8,605,029**	**$ 9,244,637**	**7.4%**	**$ 3,079,546**
	Recreation and sports foodservice				
8,600	Movies	$ 263,285	$ 286,981	9.0%	$ 83,224
3,814	Bowling lanes	779,882	813,417	4.3	273,308
N/A	Recreation and sports centers	1,324,155	1,489,674	12.5	469,247
12,414	**Total—Recreation and sports foodservice**	**$ 2,367,322**	**$ 2,590,072**	**9.4%**	**$ 825,779**
	All other foodservice				
4,134	Vending and non-store retailers[12]	$ 4,937,911	$ 5,239,124	6.1%	$ 1,582,215
1,760	Mobile caterers	754,535	808,862	7.2	248,321
5,894	**Total—All other foodservice**	**$ 5,692,446**	**$ 6,047,986**	**6.2%**	**$ 1,830,536**
536,796	**Total—Group I**	**$189,110,201**	**$200,354,756**	**5.9%**	**$64,618,037**

Footnotes

1. Reflects reporting change by the Bureau of the Census from units operating at the end of the year to units operating anytime during the year.
2. Data are given only for establishments with payroll.
3. Figures are latest census-area reports or merchandise-line detail counts or updates when reliable data become available.
4. Unit count includes only those establishments serving food; however, sales figure is for all bars and taverns with payroll.
5. Food only. Cost of alcoholic beverages totaled $2,572,036,000.
6. Food and drink sales for nonpayroll establishments totaled $4,787,186,000, with eating places accounting for $3,524,389,000 and drinking places, $1,262,797,000.
7. Food purchases only.
8. Individual businesses, not locations. Contract feeders are included in eating-place totals in all Bureau of Census publications although their sales volume figures are significantly understated.
9. Due to insufficient reporting on major sources of receipts in the *1987 Census of Service Industries*, data is estimated.
10. Includes a portion of the deli department.
11. Includes SIC 59 except 591 and 596.
12. Includes sales of hot foods, sandwiches, pastries, coffee and other hot beverages.
13. School lunch commodities furnished in the calendar year 1989 under Secs. 6, 32 and 416 were worth $718,498,100. In addition, 187,429,850 half-pints of milk worth $18,930,870 were supplied.
14. Total number of colleges and universities which have foodservice whether contracted or not.
15. Represents sales or commercial equivalent to employees.
16. Sales (commercial equivalent) calculated for nursing homes and homes for aged only. All others in the grouping make no charge for food served.
17. All 50 states plus the District of Columbia.

*** These institutions make no charge for food served.

N/A = Not available

Estimated food and drink sales and purchases, 1989

Number of units	Type of establishment	Estimated food and drink sales (000) 1988	Estimated food and drink sales (000) 1989	Percent gain (loss)	Estimated food and drink purchases (000) 1989
	Group II: Institutional Feeding—Business, educational, government or institutional organizations which operate their own foodservice				
	Employee foodservice				
3,210	Industrial and commercial organizations	$ 1,657,766	$ 1,641,188	−1.0%	$ 705,464
383	Seagoing ships (1,000+ tons)	37,120	36,415	−1.9	21,849
4,248	Inland waterway vessels	290,282	309,731	6.7	185,839
7,841	**Total—Employee foodservice**	**$ 1,985,168**	**$ 1,987,334**	**0.1%**	**$ 913,152**
	Educational foodservice				
92,841	Public and parochial elementary and secondary schools (86,849 national school-lunch programs)[13]	$ 3,346,809	$ 3,477,870	3.9%	$ 3,388,907
1,063	Public colleges and universities[14]	2,377,593	2,532,136	6.5	975,019
1,692	Private colleges and universities[14]	1,158,274	1,226,612	5.9	522,120
2,755	Total—Colleges and universities	$ 3,535,867	$ 3,758,748	6.3%	$ 1,497,139
95,596	**Total—Educational foodservice**	**$ 6,882,676**	**$ 7,236,618**	**5.1%**	**$ 4,886,046**
	Transportation foodservice				
65	Passenger/cargo liners	$ 290,754	$ 334,658	15.1%	$ 184,062
62	Airlines	629,663	684,444	8.7	341,202
2	Railroads	64,450	70,350	9.2	29,899
129	**Total—Transportation foodservice**	**$ 984,867**	**$ 1,089,452**	**10.6%**	**$ 555,163**
	Hospital foodservice				
3,989	Voluntary and proprietary hospitals	$ 5,686,630	$ 6,142,660	8.0%	$ 2,457,064
1,466	State and local short-term hospitals[15]	832,266	886,587	6.5	569,333
883	Long-term, general, TB and psychiatric hospitals	890,425	937,258	5.3	374,903
340	Federal hospitals[15]	416,885	429,875	3.1	320,692
6,678	**Total—Hospital foodservice**	**$ 7,826,206**	**$ 8,396,380**	**7.3%**	**$ 3,721,992**
29,169	Nursing homes, homes for the aged, blind, orphans, mentally and physically handicapped[16]	$ 3,402,019	$ 3,667,376	7.8%	$ 2,253,089
	Miscellaneous foodservice				
10,310	Clubs	$ 1,809,254	$ 1,914,191	5.8%	$ 719,434
2,806	Sporting and recreation camps	146,730	154,800	5.5	92,880
15,473	Community centers	532,901	608,040	14.1	717,487
N/A	Convents and seminaries	***	***	***	74,584
28,589	**Total—Miscellaneous foodservice**	**$ 2,488,885**	**$ 2,677,031**	**7.6%**	**$ 1,604,385**
	Penal institutions				
791	Federal and state prisons	***	***	***	$ 671,082
3,338	Jails	***	***	***	531,694
4,129	**Total—Penal institutions**	*******	*******	*******	**$ 1,202,776**
172,131	**Total—Group II**	**$ 23,569,821**	**$ 25,054,191**	**6.3%**	**$15,136,603**
708,927	**Total—Groups I and II**	**$212,680,022**	**$225,408,947**	**6.0%**	**$79,754,640**
	Food furnished to foodservice employees in Groups I and II	***	***	***	$ 5,129,647
708,927	**Total—Groups I, II and FSE**	**$212,680,022**	**$225,408,947**	**6.0%**	**$84,884,287**
	Group III: Military Feeding				
N/A	Defense personnel	***	***	***	$ 2,235,001
700	Officers' and NCO clubs ("open mess")[17]	$ 659,443	$ 697,031	5.7%	234,586
556	Military exchange foodservice	337,954	358,907	6.2	133,908
1,256	**Total—Group III**	**$ 997,397**	**$ 1,055,938**	**5.9%**	**$ 2,603,495**
710,183	**GRAND TOTAL**	**$213,677,419**	**$226,464,885**	**6.0%**	**$87,487,782**

Source: National Restaurant Association; Malcolm M. Knapp, Inc.

Restaurant beverage update

A new National Restaurant Association study indicates that consumption of certain beverages, specifically bottled waters and tea, grew substantially between 1987 and 1990, while milk consumption declined drastically.

The National Restaurant Association has commissioned several special studies to investigate consumer beverage choices at restaurants, using data obtained from NFO Research Inc.'s Share of Intake Panel (SIP), which measures beverage consumption.

Analysis of SIP away-from-home data[1] indicates that consumption in terms of volume[2] of total beverages increased slightly betweeen 1987 and 1990. A slight increase in nonalcoholic beverage consumption countered a small decline in alcoholic beverage consumption. Soft drinks remained the most popular beverage choice when eating out in 1990, as in 1987. The fastest-growing beverages between 1987 and 1990 in terms of volume consumed, however, were bottled water and tea.

Away-from-home consumption changes based on volume were minimal for most beverages between 1987 and 1990, with the exception of bottled water (up 116 percent), tea (up 17 percent) and milk (down 24 percent). It is important to note that bottled water accounted for less than one-half of one percent of the total volume of beverages consumed away from home, whereas tea accounted for 14.9 percent of total volume consumed away from home, up from 12.8 percent in 1987.

Consumption of both bottled water and tea grew at tableservice and fast food restaurants during the three-year period. Bottled water consumption grew at a higher rate at fast food places, while tea consumption grew at a higher rate at tableservice restaurants. Milk consumption declined at both fast food and tableservice restaurants. The decline was greater at fast food places.

Soft drinks topped the 1990 list in terms of volume consumed away from home, followed by coffee, tea, malt beverages (which includes beer), and "other nonalcoholic beverages."[3]

In 1987, too, soft drinks were the most popular beverage for away-from-home consumption, followed by coffee, malt beverages, tea, and other nonalcoholic beverages.

Consumption by restaurant type

In 1990, 51 percent of the total volume of beverages consumed away from home was consumed at tableservice restaurants—up from 45 percent in 1987. Fast food restaurants accounted for 34 percent by volume of beverages consumed away from home in 1990—down from 37 percent in 1987. The remaining 15 percent of beverages consumed away from home was consumed at bars and private clubs, compared with 18 percent in 1987.

□ **Tableservice restaurants**. In terms of popularity, soft drinks were the most popular beverage at tableservice restaurants in 1990. Nearly half (45.6 percent) of all people who ordered a drink at a tableservice restaurant ordered a soft drink. Coffee (33.3 percent) and tea (27.8 percent) were second and third in number of orders.

However, coffee was the leader in terms of volume consumed at tableservice restaurants. Coffee accounted for 28.9 percent of the total volume of beverages consumed at tableservice restaurants. Soft drinks (26.7 percent) and tea (23.2 percent) were second and third.

These consumption patterns were slightly different from 1987 patterns. In 1987, soft drinks accounted for more than half of all beverages ordered at

[1]"Away from home" refers to fast food restaurants, other restaurants, bars and private clubs. It does not include beverages consumed elsewhere, including sporting events, private in-house parties, office/work, school, picnics, camping or in another person's home.

*[2]Analysis of away-from-home beverage consumption is based on two different measures: (1) the total volume or ounces consumed and (2) the number of drinkers consuming a beverage. The number of drinkers is referred to as **penetration** and is a measure of product appeal, whereas the **volume** shows the total consumption that a particular beverage attracts.*

[3]Includes chocolate/cocoa, milkshakes/malts, fruit drinks and powdered soft drinks.

Changes in away-from-home beverage consumption 1987–1990

Tea and bottled water showed the largest increases in away-from-home consumption

Beverage	Percent change in volume consumed 1987–1990
Total beverages	0.4%
Total nonalcoholic	1.0
Soft drinks	-1.2
Coffee	-0.4
Tea	17.1
Milk	-23.8
Fruit juice	0.1
Bottled water	116.1
Other nonalcoholic	-6.6
Total alcoholic	-2.3
Liquor	4.8
Wine	-3.3
Malt beverages	-3.0

Source: National Restaurant Association; NFO Research Inc., *Share of Intake Panel, 1987 and 1990*

Index of alcoholic beverage consumption by volume at tableservice restaurants

Alcoholic beverage consumption at tableservice restaurants appears to be on the rise again

	1980	1982	1984	1986	1987	1990
Total consumption	100	88	80	85	83	97
Liquor	100	82	84	78	87	79
Wine	100	94	96	93	92	97
Malt beverages	100	87	73	83	78	101

Note: *1980 = 100*
Source: National Restaurant Association; NFO Research Inc., *Share of Intake Panel, 1980-1990*

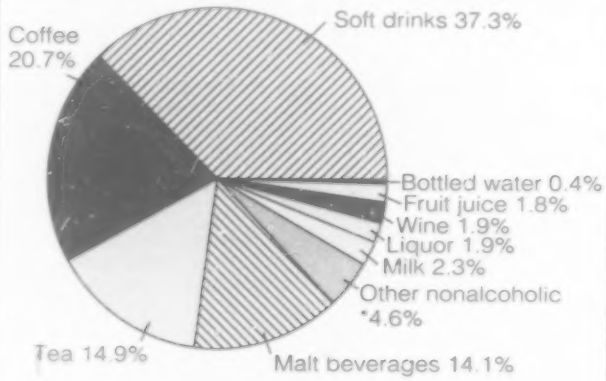
tableservice restaurants. Coffee (31.9 percent of all orders) and tea (24.5 percent of all orders) were not as popular in 1987 as in 1990. On a volume basis in 1987, soft drinks were the beverage leader (29.5 percent of volume), followed by coffee (28.8 percent) and tea (20.0 percent).

□ **Fast food restaurants**. Soft drinks were the undisputed beverage of choice at fast food restaurants in 1990. Soft drinks accounted for 63.5 percent of the total volume of beverages ordered at fast food restaurants, and had a penetration rate of 71.2 percent. Coffee (14.8 percent of volume), tea (8.2 percent of volume), and other nonalcoholic beverages (8.1 percent of volume) trailed well behind in terms of volume ordered. Coffee (15.9 percent), other nonalcoholic beverages (15.6 percent), and tea (9.9 percent) also had much lower penetration than soft drinks at fast food establishments.

Beverage consumption has changed slightly since 1987 at fast food restaurants. Coffee accounted for a larger share of the total volume of beverages consumed at fast food restaurants in 1987 than in 1990, while soft drinks, tea and other nonalcoholic beverages held smaller shares of the total volume of beverages consumed. Similarly, penetration rates were lower for soft drinks and other nonalcoholic beverages in 1987 than in 1990, while coffee penetration was higher in 1987 than in 1990.

Beverage consumption away from home, 1990

Soft drinks accounted for more than one-third of the total volume of beverages consumed away from home



Breakdown of volume consumed

*Includes chocolate/cocoa, milkshakes/malts, fruit drinks and powdered soft drinks.

Source: National Restaurant Association; NFO Research Inc., *Share of Intake Panel, 1990*

Alcoholic beverages

Alcoholic beverage consumption at tableservice restaurants increased between 1987 and 1990 in terms of both volume consumed and in penetration. Much of the increase was due to greater consumption and popularity of wine and malt beverages. The volume of wine consumed at tableservice restaurants grew 5.7 percent between 1987 and 1990, while malt beverage consumption grew 30.1 percent. Both beverages registered increased penetration. Liquor consumption at tableservice restaurants declined from 1987 to 1990, in terms of both volume and penetration.

Malt beverages were the most popular alcoholic beverages consumed at tableservice restaurants in 1990, accounting for nearly 64 percent of the total volume of alcoholic beverages consumed there. Wine (23 percent) and liquor (13 percent) contributed smaller proportions to total alcoholic beverage consumption at tableservice restaurants. In 1987, malt beverages accounted for 57 percent of the total volume of alcoholic beverages consumed at tableservice restaurants, followed by wine (26 percent) and liquor (17 percent).

—Nancy Michalski

What is SIP?

The purpose of NFO Research Inc.'s Share of Intake Panel (SIP) is to monitor the consumption of all beverages both at home and away from home. Every week, approximately 210 households are selected from the NFO Research Inc. panel base of 400,000. These households, which are balanced to match the latest Bureau of the Census information, are mailed a diary to record information on the entire household's beverage consumption over a two-week period.

Applicable data collected through the use of the SIP diary includes the sex, age and income of the beverage consumer, and, most important, total volume in ounces of the beverage consumed.

Panelists are taught how to accurately measure the volume of their beverage consumption, especially when away from home.

Comparing SIP information from year to year yields insights into the changing beverage preferences of away-from-home consumers.

Spotlight on red meat

Despite a continuing decline in per capita red meat consumption, red meat entrees remained the most popular entrees at tableservice restaurants in 1990. Red meat entrees were included in almost one-fifth of tableservice restaurant orders. However, orders for red meat entrees slipped in 1990, declining 2 percent.

In 1990, according to CREST, beef entrees remained king among red meats ordered at restaurants. Of all eater occasions[1] that included red meat entrees, beef entrees represented 60 percent of red meat orders, followed by ham entrees (which represented 9 percent), BBQ ribs (9 percent), pork (8 percent), veal (4 percent), and other meats such as game and lamb (10 percent).

Red meat entrees remained the most popular entrees at tableservice restaurants, included in nearly one-fifth of orders. Red meat entrees were included in 17 percent of eater occasions at midscale restaurants in 1990, while chicken/poultry entrees captured a lower 10 percent of eater occasions and fish/seafood entrees represented 9 percent.

Red meat entrees are also relatively popular at upscale restaurants, included in 19 percent of eater occasions in 1990. This is comparable to fish/seafood entrees (capturing 19 percent of eater occasions) and almost double that of chicken/poultry entrees (10 percent).

However, the number of orders for red meat entrees declined 2 percent in 1990, after remaining stable in 1989. The decline was primarily driven by a 3 percent drop in red meat entree orders at upscale restaurants in 1990. Red meat entree orders at midscale restaurants also declined, dropping 1 percent.

Beef orders remain stable

Despite the overall figures for red meat, the recent decline in beef entree orders at restaurants appears to have stopped, due to a growth in beef orders at midscale restaurants. In 1990, beef entrees were virtually the only type of red meat entrees not showing a decline in the number of orders. The number of beef entree orders remained stable, after declining 4 percent in both 1988 and 1989. Although the number of orders for ham entrees in the industry remained flat in 1990, orders for pork declined 10 percent. BBQ rib orders dropped 8 percent, and veal orders declined 7 percent.

The majority (63 percent) of beef entree orders in 1990 were at midscale restaurants, 25 percent were at upscale establishments, and the remainder were at quickservice places. Beef entree orders at midscale places jumped 4 percent in 1990, contrary to the overall declining beef consumption pattern. In 1990, midscale family-style restaurants and cafeterias showed especially strong gains in the number of beef entree orders. However, beef entree orders at upscale places did not fare as well in 1990, declining 4 percent.

A 1989 National Restaurant Association study, *Attitudes Toward Nutrition in Restaurants: Assessing the Market*, confirms that beef remains a popular item at restaurants. In 1989 four out of five adults had ordered steak or roast beef in restaurants in the past year. According to the survey results, 81 percent of restaurant patrons said they had ordered steak or roast beef in the past year, more than said they had ordered broiled/baked fish or seafood (79 percent), or poultry without skin (65 percent). More than four out of five men (85 percent) had ordered steak or roast beef in the previous year, compared with 77 percent of women.

Lower red meat consumption

According to the USDA Economic Research Service, preliminary 1990 data indicates that per capita consumption[2] of red meat (beef, pork, veal, lamb) was 112.4 pounds, down 3 percent from 1989. In 1985, per capita red meat consumption was 124.9 pounds and has decreased steadily since that time.

However, analysis of USDA data reveals that some red meats—namely pork—have fared better than others. Pork consumption has increased since the late 1970s, despite a 4 percent decline in per capita consumption in 1990. Per

Per capita consumption* of red meat (boneless, trimmed equivalent)

Beef remains the most popular red meat, although per capita consumption continues to slip

Year	Consumption in pounds				
	All red meat**	Beef	Veal	Pork	Lamb
1985	124.9	74.6	1.5	47.7	1.1
1986	122.2	74.4	1.6	45.2	1.0
1987	117.4	69.5	1.3	45.6	1.0
1988	119.6	68.6	1.1	48.8	1.0
1989	115.9	65.4	1.0	48.4	1.1
1990***	112.4	63.9	0.9	46.5	1.1

* *Excludes shipments to U.S. territories*
** *Total may not add due to rounding*
*** *Preliminary data*

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, unpublished data

[1] *An eater occasion is one meal eaten by one person.*

[2] *The boneless, trimmed equivalent.*

Red meat entrees eaten at restaurants, 1990

Red meats are ordered frequently at tableservice restaurants

Item	Percent of eater occasions on which item was ordered	
	Total midscale	Total upscale
Total red meat entrees	16.5%	18.5%
Total beef	10.8	11.8
Steak	4.3	5.3
Roast/prime rib	1.9	3.7
Ground/chopped steak	2.4	0.9
Other beef	2.2	1.9
Ham	1.9	0.9
Pork	1.2	1.2
BBQ ribs	1.0	2.1
Veal	0.5	1.5
Other meat	1.6	1.5

Note: *May include more than one food item per eater occasion*

Source: NPD/CREST *Annual Household Report, 1990*

capita lamb consumption has remained stable since the mid-1970s. In 1990, per capita lamb consumption was 1.1 pounds, unchanged from 1989.

Per capita consumption of beef remained the highest among meats (63.9 pounds), but down substantially from 65.4 pounds in 1989 and 74.6 pounds in 1985. Per capita consumption of veal hit its lowest point in more than 20 years in 1990—0.9 pounds compared with 1.5 in 1985. Per capita veal consumption peaked in the mid-1970s at 2.8 pounds.

But red meat leads menu entrees

The National Restaurant Association's 1990 menu analysis[3] reveals that red meat (beef, pork, lamb and game) accounted for the largest portion of entrees on menus at tableservice restaurants (21 percent). However, red meat's share of total entrees offered on menus was down from 24 percent in 1985, losing share to items such as poultry and pasta. Between 1985 and 1990, poultry gained 5 percentage points, reaching a 13 percent share of menu entrees, and pasta/noodle dishes gained 4 percentage points, capturing 11 percent.

According to a 1990 study by the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC), half (49 percent) of foodservice operators offered boneless pork[4] items on the menu, with boneless whole loins/loin roasts and pork tenderloin being the most widely purchased cuts. Moreover, one-third of operators who offered boneless pork said orders for pork had increased. Regionally, foodservice operators in the Northeast and North Central regions reported more menu offerings of boneless pork than operators in the South and West did.

Prices and production

Part of the decrease in per capita red meat consumption is probably related to increased prices. Beef and veal prices hit a record high in fourth-quarter 1990, according to the Producer Price Index (PPI). Preliminary PPI data show year-end 1990 beef and veal prices 7 percent above 1989 levels. Tighter grain-fed cattle supplies and lower grass-fed slaughter levels held down production increases, resulting in the higher 1990 prices.

Beef production in 1991 is forecast to rise 1 to 2 percent due almost entirely to increased grain-fed cattle, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). A combination of larger supplies of pork and poultry and a sluggish economy should depress beef prices in 1991, according to the USDA.

Pork prices reached a record high in the second half of 1990, but are projected to fall in relation to beef in 1991, according to the USDA. Pork supplies are expected to rise 2 percent in 1991. The USDA predicts that lamb prices will remain around the 1990 levels as production rises slightly.

Who eats red meat at restaurants and when?

□ According to CREST, beef dishes were especially popular with patrons over 45. Although in 1990 the over-45 crowd represented 34 percent of traffic, they captured a much higher 55 percent of beef orders.

□ Beef entrees were more popular with men than with women—in 1990, men accounted for 55 percent of beef entree orders although they represented 48 percent of restaurant traffic.

□ In 1990, 65 percent of beef entree orders were at dinner, as were 80 percent of veal entree orders and 74 percent of orders for BBQ ribs.

□ Lunch was a more popular time for ground beef and pork orders. Approximately four in 10 ground beef and pork entrees were ordered at the midday meal.

□ Ham entrees were most frequently ordered at breakfast, when almost four in 10 orders occurred. In 1990, three in 10 ham entree orders occurred at each lunch and dinner. Also, Sunday was a popular day for ham orders—nearly one-third of ham entree orders occurred on that day.

□ According to CREST, of all beef entree orders, steak was the favorite in 1990, accounting for 38 percent of total beef entree orders, followed by roast/prime rib (21 percent), other (21 percent), and ground/chopped steak (20 percent).

—Elizabeth Gordon

[3]*This information was taken from an analysis of randomly selected menus submitted to the National Restaurant Association's Great Menu Contest. Fifty menus were from 1985 and fifty from 1990.*

[4]*Boneless pork shoulder, pork tenderloin, boneless whole loins/loin roasts, pork chunks, strips, boneless uncured ham, fresh boneless pork chops, fresh ground pork, breaded and other pork items.*

Foodservice Market Measure—April/May 1991

May 1991 was the third consecutive month this year in which 50 percent or more of adults were foodservice patrons on a typical day, according to the Foodservice Market Measure.

After averaging 47 percent in the November–February period, the Market Measure posted a significant increase, rising to 53 percent in March.

Patronage remained at the 50 percent level in April and May, indicating that the recession has bottomed out. Still, patronage was off slightly from March to the April–May period, following much the same pattern as consumer confidence. After posting a record advance in March, consumer confidence fell slightly in April and dipped by 6 percent in May.

Foodservice patronage is especially sensitive to changes in disposable income. This indicator had registered small gains in both February and March after prior declines, but it remained unchanged from March to April.

In the spring months (March–May) an average of 51 percent of adults were foodservice patrons on a typical day. This figure is identical to that posted last spring, suggesting that the downturn for the industry has subsided. Nevertheless, signs of recovery in foodservice are mixed—as they are in the general economy. After averaging well below year-ago levels through the first three months of this year, lunch patronage equaled year-earlier levels in April–May, which is consistent with gains in total employment. Dinner patronage, on the other hand, averaged below year-ago levels in both April and May.

—Susan Mills

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day

Meal period	March–May 1990	January–February 1991	March–May 1991
Breakfast	6%	5%	7%
Lunch	29	24	28
Dinner	26	22	23
Snack	6	4	6

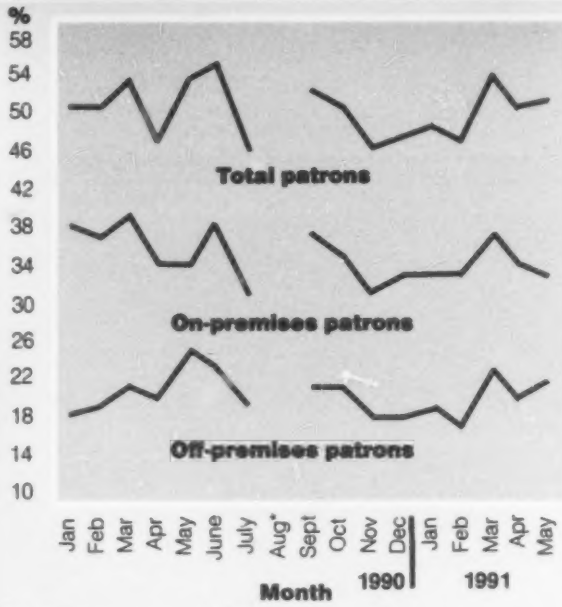
Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day

	March–May 1990	January–February 1991	March–May 1991
Male	57%	50%	55%
Female	46	46	48
Age			
18 to 24 years old	67	62	64
25 to 34 years old	58	54	55
35 to 44 years old	56	48	52
45 to 54 years old	48	44	51
55 to 64 years old	41	40	47
65 years old and older	30	34	36
Annual household income			
$40,000 or more	57	54	59
$20,000 to $39,999	55	44	50
Less than $20,000	44	44	46
Region			
East	50	50	48
Midwest	51	42	54
South	51	48	53
West	53	50	50

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons



*No Market Measure was fielded in August 1990.

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Foodservice Market Measure

The Foodservice Market Measure is based on 1,000 telephone interviews, conducted by the Gallup Organization each month, with a nationally representative sample of adults age 18 and older. Each person is asked the same questions:

1. Which of the following did you do yesterday?

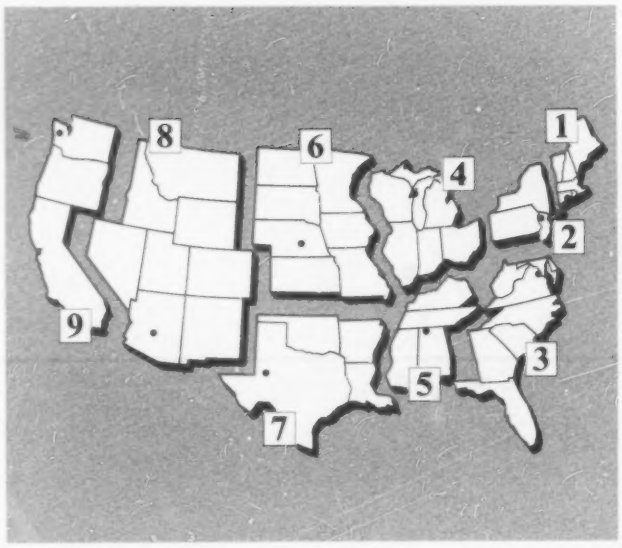
☐ Ate on the premises of a restaurant, fast food place, cafeteria or any other place where you purchased a meal or snack.

☐ Purchased takeout food "to go" or had it delivered.

2. Was the food you ate on premises yesterday for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

3. Was the takeout food you purchased or had delivered for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

The monthly tracking of purchases is supplemented by quarterly inquiries on topics of industry interest.



1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: New London, CT
Association member: Sheldon Goldstein
Operation: Goldy's Family Restaurant
Profile: Family restaurant
In business: 10 years
Seats: 200
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

"For the past 10 years, we thought this area was recession-proof," says Goldy's Family Restaurant owner **Sheldon Goldstein.** "But now defense cutbacks have hurt." Goldy's is located in defense-industry-oriented New London, Connecticut, not far from the U.S. Naval Submarine Base in Groton. Most of the restaurant's customers are what Goldstein describes as "local, hard-core regulars" who have continued to come to Goldy's despite the recent recession. But even though they still come in, they are not spending as much. They order moderately priced entrees without side dishes or have pre-dinner cocktails at home. Credit-card use is also down. Goldstein hopes that business will break loose with the summer tourist season.

Specials at Goldy's include prime rib, lobster and other seafood, and Delmonico steak. In order to compete with restaurants in the area, Goldstein invests in advertising on local cable television, in newspapers and on billboards.

2 MID-ATLANTIC

Location: Belvidere, NJ
Association member: Michael Moyer
Operation: Thisilldous Eatery & Ice Cream Parlor
Profile: Family restaurant and ice cream parlor
In business: 8 years
Seats: 49
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner, sweet treats

Owner **Michael Moyer** says he never expected to get rich quick with his Thisilldous Eatery & Ice Cream Parlor. Located in bucolic northwestern New Jersey, on the Delaware River, the town of Belvidere boasts only 2,200 inhabitants. With the 1980s building boom over, Moyer says the town's economy is "pretty mellow."

Moyer says that the best way to attract local customers is to keep prices down. For instance, the breakfast special of two eggs, homefries, toast and coffee costs only $1.80, and specialty sundaes such as the Thisilldous Belt-Bustin' Side-Splitter are priced between $2.15 and $4.99.

The restaurant's name is derived from a similar restaurant that Moyer visited in Ireland. The story goes that a famous Irish chef became tired of being shuffled around to different locations, so he bought a house in rural Ireland, renovated it, and declared "This 'ill do us!"

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Triangle, VA
Association member: Richard T. Spooner
Operation: The Globe & Laurel Restaurant
Profile: Fullservice restaurant
In business: 24 years
Seats: 62
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Retired U.S. Marine **Major Richard T. Spooner,** owner of The Globe and Laurel Restaurant, describes his restaurant as "one of a kind." The Globe and Laurel caters to a rather specific clientele: officers from the adjacent Quantico Marine Base and FBI agents and visiting law-enforcement professionals attending the FBI Academy in Quantico.

Spooner describes The Globe and Laurel, which is named after the crest of the British Royal Marines, as a museum filled with artifacts and memorabilia from the marines of the world. This has made the restaurant a tourist attraction as well as a local haunt.

Dinner at The Globe & Laurel is fixed-price ($12.95), and it includes a relish bowl filled with fresh vegetables, French onion soup (a house specialty), garden salad and an entree. The restaurant bar stocks just one premium variety of each liquor. Although this means that costs are higher, it keeps things simple. "If you serve the best, no one can complain," says Spooner.

4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Sister Bay, WI
Association member: Axel Al Johnson
Operation: Al Johnson's Swedish Restaurant and Butik
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 43 years
Seats: 150
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

"Business has picked up every day since May 15th," says **Al Johnson,** who co-owns the restaurant with his wife, **Ingert.** As the name suggests, Al Johnson's specializes in Scandinavian fare. Specialties include Swedish Pancakes (which may be served with lingonberries from Scandinavia), Swedish meatballs, homemade pickled herring and limpa bread—a Swedish bread with orange flavoring. The restaurant also serves cloudberries, which are only found in Scandinavia and California.

The present restaurant facility was designed by Ingert Johnson, constructed in Norway and assembled in Wisconsin in 1973. The log-cabin structure sits on traditional Scandinavian-styled grounds overlooking a pond. The roof is covered with 10,000 square feet of

grass, and from Mother's Day until November 1 (weather permitting), four to eight goats graze on the roof.

To complement the restaurant, Al Johnson's has "butiks" (Swedish for "boutique"), where one can buy men's and women's fashions and authentic Scandinavian merchandise.

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Killen, AL
Association member: Nel Lopour
Operation: Outpost 72
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 4 years
Seats: 100
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Nel Lopour, manager of Outpost 72, has noticed an upswing in business this year, despite an increase in competition. The local economy picked up right after the end of the war.

Outpost 72 is a counter-service restaurant that specializes in barbecue. Catering and carryout are big sources of business, and Lopour is considering adding a drive-thru window. In addition to its fine barbecue, Outpost 72 has a bakery on premises which produces cheesecakes, pies, breads and the house specialty: "Killer Brownies."

Outpost 72, which is owned by **Sam** and **Regina Bagley,** is located in a converted log cabin and is decorated in country-rustic style. The upstairs loft is frequently used for private parties. Up front, cases display the large assortment of baked goods.

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Grand Island, NE
Association member: Jim Bryant
Operation: Sax's Pizza of Grand Island
Profile: Family-style pizzeria
In business: 11 years
Seats: 100
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Business was off last winter, with the war and bitter cold, but now it's improving, says **Jim Bryant** of Sax's Pizza of Grand Island.

Delivery is a big part of Sax's business, but Bryant admits he can't compete with chains that frequently wage price wars. "I keep a graph, and by looking at it I can tell when Domino's or Pizza Hut has run a special. Business just drops off for a while," says Bryant.

To carve its own niche, Sax's has built its reputation by offering a quality pizza that goes heavy on toppings. The restaurant has developed a loyal customer base, which it strives to increase through community involvement. For instance, Sax's awards a free pizza party to the school with the highest PTA enrollment. Sax's also participates in the local Renaissance Program, which provides incentives, like free Sax's pizzas, to average students as a reward for their continuing attendance.

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Midland, TX
Association members: Louis and Zelda Hochman
Operation: Luigi's
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 32 years
Seats: 100
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

One of the reasons Luigi's has survived the hard times that have hit much of the West Texas oil patch is that the restaurant did not get carried away with the expansion craze in the boom years of the 1980s, says general manager **Steve Kempton.** Having been in business for 32 years, the restaurant is well known to the people in the surrounding area who make up the steady clientele.

Luigi's is a traditional Italian family-style restaurant: "real homey, no carpeting on the floor—the kind of place you can bring your kids and not worry about them spilling anything," says Kempton. The restaurant is located in downtown Midland, which makes parking tight during business hours.

Service is a key element in Luigi's success. Most of the employees are locals who have been with the restaurant for a long time—the head chef for 30 years, a prep chef for 27 years and many others for more than five years.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Tempe, AZ
Association member: Joe Kennedy
Operation: Vine Tavern
Profile: Tavern and eatery
In business: 4½ years
Seats: 200
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"In the past year-and-a-half things have picked up," says **Dave Kiepe,** the manager of Vine Tavern. Kiepe describes Vine Tavern as "a large bar that serves food." Although the bar business is the mainstay, the tavern does a good food business too, serving only a few items, such as chicken wings.

Vine Tavern attracts a variety of customers. Located 10 miles from Phoenix and just around the corner from the Tempe campus of Arizona State University, the restaurant draws a large business crowd at lunchtime and for happy hour. A younger crowd, including many students, comes later in the evening. In between, a family crowd patronizes Vine Tavern for early dinner.

9 PACIFIC

Location: Quinault, WA
Association member: Michelle Morrison
Operation: Rain Forest Resort
Profile: Family restaurant and resort
In business: 20 years
Seats: 60
Meals served: Dinner

The Rain Forest Resort, owned by **Michelle** and **David Morrison,** is located in the Olympic Rain Forest in Washington State's Olympic Peninsula. "We get 140 inches of rain each year," says David Morrison.

Tourists come from Seattle, Portland and California to see the rain forest, including some of the largest spruce trees in the world, and to enjoy the water recreation on Lake Quinault. These tourists are attracted to Rain Forest Resort for its spectacular view and good food. A house specialty is salmon, which is caught locally.

Being in a rain forest has its drawbacks, too. Aside from tourism, the region's other principal industry is logging, which has recently fallen on hard times. But with the summer season here, the Rain Forest Resort expects business to pick up.

—Kathy Palumbo

PULL OUT SLOWLY

10 Easy Things *We* Can Do to *Serve* the Earth

On the reverse side, you will find the artwork for an important ecological message. The ten suggested ways of serving the Earth speak to both employees and guests. Remove the artwork from the magazine and take it to your printer. (Your printer can reduce this artwork to place mat size.) By selecting appropriate size and quality of paper, you can use the artwork to produce place mats, tray liners, posters, or even handouts. (You may want to choose recycled paper.)

If you prefer, place mats bearing this message are available in packages of 1,000 at reasonable cost from the National Restaurant Association publications department at (800)-424-5156.

Our customers are concerned about the environment. The National Restaurant Association encourages its members to show they share this concern by utilizing this artwork in a form appropriate to their operations.

10 easy things *we* can do to *Serve* the Earth

It seems that everywhere we turn these days, one group or another tells us how to SAVE the Earth. But the issues are so complex that it's often difficult to be sure which solution is correct; it's tempting to conclude that none of us individually can have much effect.

But of course, if each of us does a little, the combined effect can be striking. It's just a matter of finding those things we can do easily, and then expanding our joint efforts.

In this restaurant we are devoted to food***SERVICE***; we ***serve*** the bounty of the Earth. Now we think it's time to ***serve*** the Earth itself.

Here are 10 easy suggestions that the National Restaurant Association recommends for its members to consider. We also recommend them for our employees and customers to consider at their work and in their homes.

1 Plant a tree: Trees consume large amounts of carbon dioxide, a major "greenhouse gas"; trees also provide shade, evaporative cooling, and a pleasing appearance. If you're not sure how to go about it, contact your local forestry service, horticultural society or nursery.

2 Conserve water: Save water for important uses, such as sustaining trees or cooking. Consider installing low-flow aerators on sink faucets and shower heads, or low-flush toilets. These are easy, inexpensive ways to save thousands of gallons of water each year. Do not waste water. Fix leaky faucets. Replace leaky gaskets. Wait until you have a full load before running the laundry machine or dishwashing machine. Most important, don't allow water to run longer than needed. A household can save as much as 20,000 gallons every year with these kinds of simple controls.

3 Save energy: Modern restaurants and homes use large amounts of electricity and gas for cooking equipment, heating and air conditioning, hot water, refrigeration and so forth. Keep all equipment in good repair and well-adjusted to get the most for your energy dollar. Keep water heaters set at about 130°F. Seal doors and windows, and add extra insulation in attics and crawl spaces. Check with your utility company about energy audits that can show you even more ways to save energy and dollars.

4 Put the problem in a new light: Ask an expert about new energy-efficient lamps and fixtures. Remember to turn off lights that aren't being used.

5 Reduce trash at the source: Take a long, hard look at what you toss into the waste bin. Is there an area where you could cut back? Would buying in bulk produce less trash? Do you really need to use more than one napkin, more than one paper towel?

6 Recycle wherever you can: Check out the availability of recycling services in your community. Metals, paper, glass and plastic are all being recycled at an increasing rate. All of us can recycle more, even if we can't recycle everything.

7 Consider composting: Almost one-fifth of the total waste stream is made up of yard and garden waste — lawn clippings, leaves and similar organic material. With a little room and a little effort, this waste can be turned into soil-enriching compost for your own use, instead of taking up valuable space in landfills. Composting is easier than you might think — consult your local nursery for details on how easy it can be for you.

8 Drive safely and smoothly: Buy the longest-lasting, most fuel-efficient tires you can, and keep them properly inflated. Keep your vehicle well-tuned for maximum mileage and minimum emissions. Sudden starts waste fuel and increase wear and tear. Unnecessary idling wastes fuel.

9 Pick it up: A lot of the solid waste problem is really a litter problem. Don't litter, and when you see litter, pick it up and dispose of it properly! It will help beautify the community, set a good example for others and make you feel good about doing something positive!

10 Get involved: Environmental issues affect us all, so don't wait for someone else to make the important decisions. Get involved in your homeowners association, community planning bodies and local government. Speak up and let officials know how you feel, what you want and what you are willing to do to help.

NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

Adapted from *50 Simple Things You Can Do To Save The Earth*, Earthworks Press, Berkeley, CA, 1989.

PULL OUT
SLOWLY

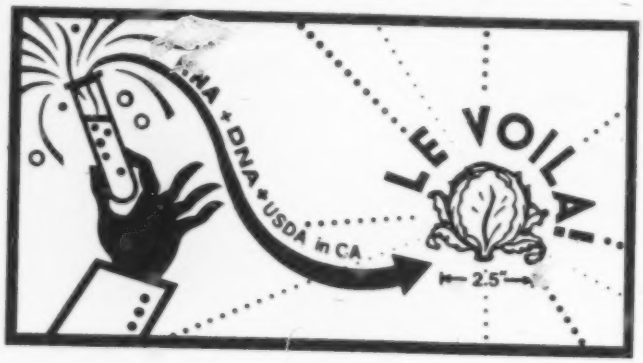
A handful of heads

As the number of single people continues to rise, retailers continue to develop new foods fit for one. Now such diminution has gone beyond packaging and prepping. With the help of genetic engineering, scientists have devised a way to grow the basis for the perfect solo salad—Midget Lettuce.

These tiny heads of iceberg lettuce are about the size of a tennis ball, only 25 percent as large as a regular head. The taste and texture remain the same. The miniheads were developed through tinkering with the dwarf gene at the USDA's Research Station in Salinas, California. The tiny 'bergs could be in markets within a couple of years.

Since a midget lettuce head could be consumed at one sitting, it could put an end to the problem of rotting leftover lettuce in restaurant refrigerators.

—*Denver Post* and *Wall Street Journal*



Sticking it to the pub

Patrons are bouncing *on* the walls at The Pub at the Criterion Hotel in Napier, New Zealand.

In the latest bizarre barroom sport to capture drinkers' interest, customers dressed in Velcro suits leap off a mini-trampoline and hurl themselves toward a Velcro-covered wall, hoping to stick themselves as high up on the wall as possible. So far the record height is 15 feet, which included a midair flip that landed the contestant upside down.

The wall is padded to cushion upon impact, and staff members stand ready to catch those who fail to fasten. In many cases, however, flying patrons stick so hard they have to be peeled off the wall.

—*National Public Radio's "Morning Edition"*

Not coming to a menu near you

In an area of China known for exotic fare such as raccoon, owl, snake and bear, the Jialu restaurant is dedicated to the culinary art of rat. Rat at Jialu comes braised, boiled or barbecued, and in soups, in stews and on skewers. It can be deep fried or flambeed. The meat, say diners, tastes fine, reminiscent of chicken or duck.

Afraid that even his open-minded customers might find rat unappealing, owner Zhang Guoxon refers to his rats as "super deer" to separate his prize catch from common sewer rats. Unlike street rats, Zhang's "deer" are free-range rodents that feed on fruits and vegetables in the wilds of the mountains.

—*Wall Street Journal*

Golden granny

Many retirement-aged people might find Angie Runnels' job at McDonald's of wiping tables, restocking supplies and greeting customers too strenuous. But the 91-year-old "McGranny" (as she's popularly known) says her new job as a hostess keeps her feeling younger. After only a few months on the job, Runnels, who is McDonald's oldest employee, is becoming something of a star.

Runnels works a five-hour shift on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at the store near the Houston Astrodome, but her growing fame works full-time for the restaurant. At her recent 91st birthday celebration, sponsored by her friends at the restaurant, cards and gifts poured in from fellow employees and customers, many of whom return again and again to lunch with McGranny.

—*Houston Chronicle*

Tuesday on the town

In an effort to lure recession-weary New Yorkers and suburbanites out of their homes and back out into the nightlife, New York City has launched "Tuesday Night Out."

The weekly event is an effort by the mayor's office to boost traffic in the entertainment community by encouraging the lowering of prices on Tuesdays. Stage theaters and movie houses are already supporting the promotion, as are many parking lots and garages. Tuesday-night movie audiences, for example, pay one-third less to view a flick and $3 less to park their cars.

The mayor's office is eager for restaurateurs to join the promotion as well, and the New York State Restaurant Association encourages its members to participate by lopping 15 percent off customers' checks on Tuesday nights.

—*Cooking for Profit*

HOW MUCH IS THE RIGHT AMOUNT TO PAY YOUR STAFF?

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION VOL. 11 NO. 7 AUGUST 1991

We're glad you're here!

RESTAURANTSUSA

BRINGING OUT THE ANGEL IN YOUR EMPLOYEES

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FOCUS IN ON THE FAMILY MARKET

NOT ATTRACTING FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN TO YOUR RESTAURANT?

Considering that households with children accounted for 43 percent of all spending on food away from home, families are an important part of your market.

Find out just how influential children are in the decision to dine out. Learn children's favorite menu items and parents' most preferred restaurant services for children.

The new association publication, *The Market for Children and Family Dining* (CS680), is on sale now for $25 to members and $50 to nonmembers. Contact the association's Information Service and Library to order at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960.

EXECUTIVE STUDY GROUP SERIES

Internal Audit
9/24–27 Orlando, FL

Financial Officers
10/2–4 Cape Cod, MA

Tax Executives
10/2–4 Cape Cod, MA

Large Independent Operators
10/8–11 Philadelphia, PA

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10/9–11 Atlanta, GA

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10/9–11 Atlanta, GA

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10/15–18 Atlanta, GA

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10/16–19 San Diego, CA

Foodservice Purchasing Managers
10/23–24 Denver, CO

Quality Assurance
10/23–25 St. Louis, MO

Multiunit Environmental Affairs Officers
11/6–8 San Diego, CA

For more information on specific study groups, contact Rosemary Curtis at (312) 853-2525.

The Executive Study Groups present semi-annual professional development programs for executives who would like to meet with their industry peers to share ideas and concerns. Executives in each of the aforementioned disciplines from member foodservice companies are welcome and encouraged to participate.

FMP TEST DATES

8/5 New Orleans, LA

8/10 Los Angeles, CA

SEMINARS

SERVSAFE Responsible Alcohol Service
9/25 (full-day program)
11/25 (full-day program)

SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation Train the Trainer
9/30–10/2
(three-day program)

Service That Sells
10/21 (half-day program)
10/22 (half-day program)

Tips & Tools for Training
11/5 (half-day program)

Legal Issues: The Americans with Disabilities Act
11/18 (full-day program)

Note: Unless otherwise indicated, all seminars are held in the Educational Foundation's conference center at 250 South Wacker Drive in Chicago.

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Executive Editor Jeffrey R. Prince
Editor Paul Moomaw
Managing Editor Melanie A. Crosby
Staff Contributors
Jennifer Batty, Pat DiDomenico, Elizabeth Gordon, Andrew McLauchlin, Nancy Michalski, Susan Mills, B. Hudson Riehle, Denise Roach, Diane Welland
Art Direction
Magazine: Tom Bellucci
Covers: Richard Earle, Liz Dalgetty
Administrative Assistant Susan Kessler
Editorial Secretary Ronda Bowers
Intern Kathy Paiumbo

Editorial office and association headquarters 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington DC 20036-3097, (202) 331-5900
Chicago office 150 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60601, (312) 853-2525
Educational Foundation 250 S. Wacker Dr. Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60606, (312) 715-1010

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

John R. Farquharson, president
ARASERVE, Philadelphia, PA

Grassroots lobbying boosts number of FICA sponsors

Lawmakers in Washington DC continue to respond to a steady flow of calls and letters from restaurant operators seeking the repeal of 1988's FICA tax on tips requirement. We're seeing a summer surge of bipartisan support for this repeal, which would restore pre-1988 requirements for payment of Social Security taxes. So far, your urgings have helped us to collect 170 sponsors for the repeal in the House and 23 sponsors in the Senate. The National Restaurant Association is aiming for a majority of the Congress—218 representatives and 51 senators—to cosponsor the repeal legislation, known as H.R. 1472 in the House and S. 765 in the Senate.

In both Louisiana and Mississippi, we've seen great examples of people-power in action. Every representative from those states has signed on to cosponsor the repeal bill. Your letters and calls are making tremendous headway in the fight to reverse this inequitable law that singles out restaurateurs. Keep up the good work. We've still got the steepest part of the mountain to climb.

Striker bill passes House

The labor-favoring Striker Replacement Bill (H.R. 5) passed in the House by a vote of 247 to 182, far short of the 290 votes needed to override an expected veto by President Bush. A vote is not expected on the Senate version of the bill (S. 55) until after Labor Day. This bill seeks to reverse 50 years of labor law by stripping employers of the right to hire permanent replacements during a strike for more pay or benefits. It would encourage more strikes and tip the balance of negotiations in favor of labor.

At an early July meeting at the White House, our chief lobbyist and other opponents of the striker bill discussed the inequities of this legislation with President Bush. During the meeting, President Bush spent 10 minutes urging the business community to stop this bill. Take President Bush's advice and do your part to prevent passage of the Striker Replacement Bill by writing or calling your senators and representatives.

"Take Your Case to Congress" in September

The 7th annual Public Affairs Conference, "Take Your Case to Congress," will run from September 23–25 at the Capital Hilton Hotel in Washington DC. The three-day event will feature face-to-face meetings with members of Congress, a keynote address from Secretary of Labor Lynn Martin and a chance to socialize with members of Congress at the elegant *Chef d'oeuvre* reception.

These days, more than ever, you need to know what Washington has planned for the foodservice industry and how your voice can make a difference. Your participation in the National Restaurant Association's Public Affairs Conference is an excellent opportunity to help build the growing influence of the foodservice industry.

We expect about 450 foodservice operators to attend the conference. To reserve a place at the Public Affairs Conference, contact Gay Westbrook at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5915.

Immigration crackdown

If you haven't done so already, your restaurant will want to get in step with the 1986 Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) immigration law. The five-year-old law requires employers to verify each worker's identity and authorization to work in the United States. Employers must also retain a completed I-9 (Employ-

ment Eligibility Verification) form for each worker. Recently, INS Commissioner Gene McNary instructed INS officials to begin an intensive six-month nationwide effort to penalize employers who violate the law.

Fines under the immigration law can be steep: between $250 and $2,000 per unauthorized worker for the first offense and up to $10,000 for more than two violations. Contact your local INS office for more information about the law.

Congressional staff party hosted

On July 15, the association hosted a party for key staff members of Capitol Hill offices. The informal gathering gave us the opportunity to say "thank you" and to build stronger relationships with congressional staffers with whom we work closely on important issues.

We intend to make the staff party an annual event in hopes of furthering friendships and alliances with congressional staffers. Knowing the right congressional staff members often makes the difference in advancing the industry's positions.

Association develops teen working guidelines

Realizing that today's teens are the business leaders of tomorrow, the association is developing a list of guidelines for restaurants that employ teenagers. Our staff has already met with leaders of the National Education Association and is now consulting with the National Parent Teacher Association to finalize those guidelines.

The guidelines are not mandates; they are merely suggestions for restaurant operators and school officials on how to balance a teenager's academic and on-the-job work experience. Adherence to these guidelines will help preserve job opportunities for teens and demonstrate an employer's concern for the quality of education received by our industry's work force. We hope to issue this list of guidelines this fall.

Foundation presents "Success" catalog

The Educational Foundation now offers *Success*, a catalog of independent-study courses for individuals interested in pursuing a career in hospitality management or looking to improve their management knowledge. The catalog features the Foundation's Management Development Courses. Also included is information on enrolling in the Foundation's Management Development Diploma Program, which earns an individual a diploma from the National Restaurant Association. To receive a free, full-color catalog, contact the Educational Foundation's customer service department at (800) 765-2122.

I'd like to welcome the 91 new members that have joined the National Restaurant Association during the past month. Your participation in association programs will benefit your business and strengthen our efforts on behalf of the industry.

Sincerely,

John Farquharson

John R. Farquharson
President and Chairman of the Board

RESTAURANTS USA

BRINGING OUT THE ANGEL IN YOUR EMPLOYEES

Manage your employees well, and you'll be managing your restaurant well. This issue of ***Restaurants USA*** helps you deal with employees—as you hire them, train them and try to retain them.

SPECIALS

9 Teen employment and the law
Employing teens isn't easy. Teen-labor laws are restrictive, and public misperceptions often give employers a bad rap. But new initiatives are being undertaken to address the problems of employing teens.

14 The power of employee training
Why do some restaurants always have great employees? Training. Two highly successful restaurant owners offer their recipes for creating top-notch employees.

18 Employee theft
When employee theft gets serious, a serious response from management is warranted. This article explains tracking and prosecuting an on-the-job thief.

23 Six ways to reduce employee turnover
Surefire tips on motivating your employees so they will stay on the team.

24 Inca grains
Quinoa and amaranth—the lost grains of the ancient Incas—may be due for a comeback on restaurant menus.

26 Avoid the pain
Restaurant work is physical work, and back injuries are painfully common. A chiropractor offers tips on preventing and dealing with back injuries in foodservice.

29 Healthy ethnic cooking
Foreign doesn't have to mean fattening. When prepared authentically, ethnic cuisines can provide low-fat dishes to spice up your menu and please nutrition-conscious customers.

33 Should you add the 401(k) to your benefits menu?
One way to keep good employees is to offer benefits that will build loyalty. Read about the benefit that helps employees save money almost effortlessly.

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Cover photo by Gary Landsman

NYC students win culinary scholarships

Egbert Gibbs, a senior at Prospect Heights High School in Brooklyn, topped more than 700 other New York City students to take home first-prize honors in a culinary-arts competition sponsored by the French Culinary Arts Project.

Gibbs, 18, won a full scholarship to the French Culinary Institute in Manhattan and a set of cookware, together worth a total of $12,750.

Four other scholarships were also awarded to home-economics students who competed.

The competition was part of the French Culinary Arts Project, a pilot program that taught French cooking to public-school students in New York City. Students in the competition were judged on their work habits, dishes created and interviews with a judging panel.

The program was conceived by Richard Grausman, a renowned teacher of French cooking. Grausman enlisted 20 food suppliers and manufacturers of kitchen equipment to contribute more than $175,000 worth of materials to launch the program. According to Grausman, the success of the program in New York has sparked interest from other school districts around the country.

Egbert Gibbs (center) of Brooklyn is congratulated for winning top honors in a culinary competition sponsored by the French Culinary Arts Project and the New York City Public Schools. Awarding the prizes are Richard Grausman, creator of the project, and Dorothy Cann, president of the French Culinary Institute.

Cooking at the academy—on TV

Anyone who has dreamed of attending a professional cooking school can get a taste of the experience by watching "Cooking at the Academy," a 13-part television series that began this summer.

The series, produced by public television station KQED in San Francisco, is partially modeled after the California Culinary Academy's curriculum, and it shows the academy's philosophy of teaching fundamental cooking techniques. "We hope the viewers will 'graduate' from the series thinking like professional chefs rather than cooks," says Gayle K. Yamada, executive producer of national productions for KQED.

During the 13 half-hour segments, the chef/instructors cover basic cooking techniques like grilling, steaming, frying, braising and sauteing. Other shows feature the preparation of pasta, soups, stocks, charcuterie and desserts. The aesthetics of food presentation are also addressed in the series, which was shot in the kitchens of the academy.

"Cooking at the Academy" premiered on July 6 in San Francisco and will be broadcast on public television stations across the country. Check with your local station to find out when the programs will be airing in your area.

Kingmond Young

Chef Susan Klugerman demonstrates pasta-making on the television show "Cooking at the Academy."

McDonald's–EDF plan: read all about it

McDonald's, the nation's largest fast food chain, recently added a member to its environmental team: the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF).

McDonald's and EDF, an independent environmental organization, have announced a monumental Waste Reduction Action Plan, which calls for many changes in the restaurant chain's solid-waste use and processing. The plan, developed after a six-month study by a joint task force, details more than 40 initiatives and tests to be carried out during the next two years to reduce solid waste and lower the environmental impact of all facets of McDonald's business. Specific plans include using unbleached paper products and products with a higher recycled content. McDonald's will test the use of reusables and composting.

The goal of these pilot projects and tests is to eventually eliminate 80 percent of McDonald's solid-waste stream.

The two organizations have published an executive summary report outlining their plan, and it's available for free. The full report can be purchased from EDF for $10. Write Peter Cleary at the Environmental Defense Fund, 1616 P Street, NW, Suite 150, Washington DC 20036.

Tucson restaurateur wins EPA recycling award

On May 15, 1991, Edmund Irving, president and co-owner of eegee's Inc., a fast food deli chain in Tucson, Arizona, became an environmental star. The restaurateur won one of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) new Administrator's Awards for his wide-reaching waste-management program known as "Recycling for People First."

Recognized for his outstanding commitment to solid-waste management, Irving won both the regional award (which included competition from Nevada, California, Hawaii and Guam, as well as Arizona) and the national award in the small-business category. "I keep telling everyone I'm not an environmentalist," says Irving. "I'm a businessman, and a good environment is good business."

The EPA, however, believes Irving is an environmentalist worthy of recognition. "There are two types of environmentalists," said EPA administrator William Reilly at the May 15 awards ceremony. "There are those who talk about the problems that we face, communicating with a dictionary of despair and coming across as negative. And then there are those who concentrate on success." Irving and his operation eegee's are definitely dedicated to success.

Still, Irving was surprised at such recognition for a restaurant—particularly a fast food restaurant. "We are so often perceived as the defilers of the environment," he says. "The perception is that we're filling up the landfills." (Statistics show that restaurants produce no more waste than other retail businesses.) Irving believes that this misconception is partly because of the high visibility of restaurants and the fact that customers throw away their waste right in the store after eating. "There's that immediate connection: Eat . . . trash," he says.

Photo courtesy of EPA

Ed Irving (second from right) receives award from EPA administrator William K. Reilly (second from left) and assistant administrator Don Clay.

Irving was delighted that a restaurant would sweep the small-business segment of the EPA awards, but the award was a special victory for eegee's. "Winning this award was extremely ironic for us in particular," he says, "considering just a year and a half ago we were attacked for supporting polystyrene foam." Such recognition makes him even more optimistic that waste-management issues are being looked at in depth. "The correct information is finally starting to filter out," he says.

"Recycling for People First"

The program that won eegee's such praise is known as "Recycling for People First."

The program began as a way to lower trash-collection fees about six years ago, when the central commissary/warehouse—the core of the chain's internal distribution system—had to add a second dumpster to handle the waste. That dumpster alone added $300 to monthly expenses. "I looked into that dumpster and all I saw was cardboard," says Irving. "That's when I decided to do something." The commissary began separating out recyclable cardboard. Before long, the second dumpster was gone, the original dumpster was downsized and the number of trash pickups decreased dramatically.

Since eegee's operates its own distribution system, the cardboard-recycling system was easily extended to the chain's 15 units. Company trucks simply picked up the separated cardboard when making deliveries and returned it to the central warehouse. The chain was soon recycling about two tons of cardboard per week, for which it was paid by a recycling company. This additional revenue, and the decreased trash fees, paid for the extra labor and equipment in no time.

Encouraged by the success of the cardboard campaign, Irving began recycling other materials, including office paper, computer paper and polystyrene foam.

Bringing in the people

Community is very important to Irving—so important that his recycling program soon became dedicated to community action as well as environmental action.

Not long after eegee's began its recycling program, the restaurant chain began doing its own baking every day. "I encourage my store operators to order about 15 percent more bread than their projected usage," says Irving, "so we ended up with a lot of leftovers. Something had to be done with it." Wary of throwing anything away, especially something others could use, Irving began donating the day-old mini-loaves to the Casa Maria

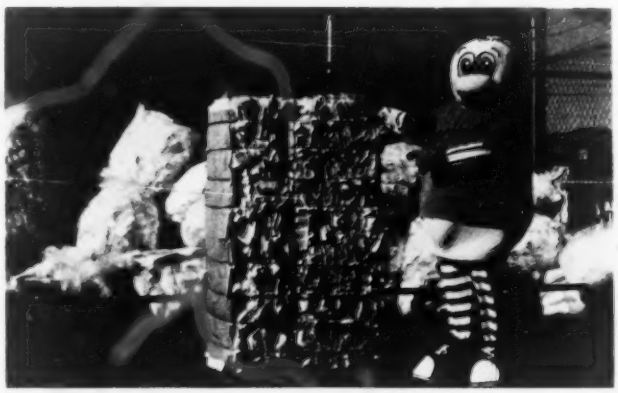


Photo courtesy of eegee's

The eegee's mascot demonstrates the restaurant's recycling program.

Soup Kitchen. "I was overwhelmed by what I saw there," says Irving of the homeless people, especially women and children, who benefit from the kitchen's programs. "There are 8,000 children in Tucson who don't have enough to eat every day," he says. "I'm very proud that we can contribute to their cause." According to Irving, eegee's "recycled" more than 200,000 pounds of bread through the soup kitchen in 1990. And it doesn't stop with bread. Other donations include meat, cheese and cups. "Whatever we don't use we give to them," he says.

In addition to foodstuffs and supplies, eegee's donates all the proceeds from its recycling efforts. The company recently added matching funds as well to bolster its contribution. "It all comes back to us in business," says Irving. "We are having no economic downturn at eegee's. This is one of the best years we've ever had. People feel good coming into our restaurants."

A "recycling coalition"

While eegee's has reached out to its neighbors in need, it has also expanded its program to include other businesses that want to help. Last year Irving began to organize other local businesses into the recycling program. He started with a neighboring convenience store, a truck rental shop and a car upholstery shop, whose managers had watched the eegee's program develop and were eager to share in both the savings and the goodwill.

Pounding the pavement, Irving solicited other Tucson businesses to join the fight to cut waste streams and to help the community. "Saving the environment alone may not be enough incentive," he says, "but the combination of that and helping fellow human beings works." Irving reports 100 percent compliance by businesses he has approached. His "recycling coalition" now includes 40 businesses, and it's growing. All proceeds collected are donated to community causes.

The public is also welcome to participate in the "coalition." Irving reports that many customers bring their recyclables to deposit at eegee's locations.

"The biggest problem with the environment today is politics."

A polystyrene promoter

Although many restaurateurs have been swept into the environmental swirl surrounding the packaging controversy, Ed Irving has solidly stood his ground on the issue of polystyrene foam.

Irving switched to foam from paper in 1985 to hold eegee's signature frozen fruit drinks. "They always melted [in paper cups]," he says. "I wanted to be able to keep them cold longer and allow people to take them home. For our product, foam was best suited to it."

But then in July 1989, the city of Tucson imposed a purchasing ban on foam cups for all city departments. Soon after, eegee's customers began writing and calling and appearing in eegee's restaurants complaining about the use of foam.

Armed with data and scientific support, Irving challenged the city council, urging them to rescind the ban. Experts who shared the pro-polystyrene stance were assembled and testified at hearings. "The biggest problem with the environment today is politics," says Irving, who believes that the ban was based on poor research. "I don't like bans," says Irving. "I don't like negative reinforcement."

The ban was finally modified in December 1990, allowing the city to purchase products in accordance with EPA guidelines. Polystyrene foam meets those standards.

Much of the chain's recycling program involves foam—not just foodservice foam, but also packing materials, building materials and a variety of other types. "Our foam recycling program is the most fun," says Irving, "because it involves the whole community. We work with the public, businesses and schools." DART Corporation, an eegee's supplier, recently provided a densifier at very little cost, so that the restaurant could bale its foam. "Since foam is 95 percent air, it is difficult to ship," says Irving. "Now we can densify first and then ship."

Much of the baled polystyrene is shipped to a National Polystyrene Recycling Company (NPRC) facility. But Irving, always concerned with new markets, recently invested some of his foam waste back into eegee's itself: one restaurant now has a new roof made of 60,000 baled post-consumer eegee's cups.

Four steps to success

Irving has much sound advice for restaurant operators facing the formidable task of developing a comprehensive program.

1. *Start small.* Don't start with everything at once, warns Irving. Operators are tempted to jump into a solid-waste program head first. "Pick your big waste source and start there," he cautions. "It'll most likely be stuff behind the counter—probably cardboard." You can build a solid program by starting with the basics.

2. *Tie in the community.* "Everything works much more smoothly when it benefits the community," says Irving.

3. *Answer your customers.* The environment is a great concern to customers. Irving reports that throughout the past few controversial years he's received many calls and letters—and he answers them. He urges restaurateurs to bring concerned customers into the establishment and expose them to the recycling system firsthand. "I show them exactly what we're doing," he says, "and I've turned many people around."

4. *Educate yourself.* "This industry is very helpful," says Irving. "There's bundles of information out there, and the facts are there." He suggests starting with suppliers, who are often eager to help with waste-management programs. "And if you have a specific problem with foam," says Irving, "call me."

—*Melanie A. Crosby*

TEEN EMPLOYMENT AND THE LAW

These days, employing teen workers seems to be getting more difficult. Restrictive legislation and concerns about teen education have put restaurateurs on the defensive about employing young workers.

The National Restaurant Association and many restaurateurs, however, are now working to reform antiquated laws and to spread the word about the importance of work for teenagers.

A JUGGLING ACT FOR FOODSERVICE OPERATORS

by Andrew McLauchlin and Denise Roach

Teens and foodservice jobs—it's a natural fit. With the industry's large number of entry-level positions, prospects for summer jobs, flexible hours and opportunities to advance, it's no surprise that more teens work in foodservice than in any other U.S. industry.

But some lawmakers, both in statehouses and in Washington, want to impose more restrictions on employers who hire workers under age 18. Following a year of heightened anti-employer rhetoric by lawmakers and a crackdown on employers by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), restaurateurs are also battling the perception that employers of teen workers are insensitive to their employees' education or safety.

The National Restaurant Association and restaurateurs around the country are taking aim at both the legislative and public-image problems by working for more reasonable, understandable laws for employers who hire minors and by going on the offense to show that they care about their employees' schooling and safety. At the same time, foodservice operators are working to defuse the rhetoric that says jobs are bad for teenagers.

Enforcement, violations way up

Last year, DOL's wage-and hour officials stepped up enforcement of teen-labor rules drastically, visiting nearly 10,000 employers during a four-part "Operation Child Watch" sweep that ended last September.

In large part because of this sweep, DOL detected more than 42,000 teen-labor law violations in 1990, more than quadruple 1983's level of 9,700. Even before the crackdown, however, the number of annual violations had climbed to about 22,000, reflecting both DOL's increased attention to child-labor law enforcement through the 1980s and the declining unemployment rates of the mid-1980s that caused more employers to turn to young workers.

Penalties assessed by DOL have risen from $834,000 in 1983 to at least $8.9 billion for the fiscal year that will end September 30, 1991. Average fines per violation have climbed from $165 in 1983 to $438 today. DOL says average fines will continue to increase in response to a new law that since last March has allowed DOL to assess a maximum penalty of $10,000 per violation, up from the previous $1,000 maximum. Under DOL's new penalty structure, employers of teens who are employed illegally and suffer serious injuries will be fined a minimum of $5,000.

Combating sensationalism

Employers of young workers have been forced into a defensive role, with advocacy groups pointing the finger at employers, blaming them for broad teen social problems including declining test scores, excessive high-school dropout rates and even materialism.

Restaurants, which accounted for about 55 percent of the total violations detected by DOL between 1983 and 1990, have been the subject of much negative publicity. While advocates decry unsafe and abusive "sweatshops" (most often found in other industries) when they argue for crackdowns on employers, DOL enforcers often head for an easier target: the nation's highly visible foodservice operations.

Yet in most cases the violations have not involved serious injuries. DOL estimates that 80 percent of teen-employment violations found in 1990 involved workers under age 16 exceeding the 18-hour limit during school weeks or working before 7 a.m. or after 7 p.m. Two-thirds of these hours violations were found in foodservice establishments, DOL says.

"Restaurants are an easy hit because they employ so many teen workers," says Mark Gorman, senior director of government affairs for the National Restaurant Association. "But the fact is, restaurants are not where the most serious violations are taking place. To portray a restaurant owner as a criminal for letting a 14 or 15-year-old work until 7:30 p.m. is excessive."

Stiffer restrictions proposed

Not satisfied that the existing penalty structure is enough of a deterrent, Congressman Don Pease (D-OH) and Senator Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH) have proposed legislation in the U.S. Congress to make federal teen-employment laws even more restrictive.

Since 1989 a number of state legislatures have also made new teen-labor rules, adding new restrictions on working hours for 16 and 17-year-olds and revamping work-permit rules, among other changes.

Restaurateurs are concerned that lawmakers are being swept away by rhetoric into drastic action. "It worries me that if the laws get too strict we will have to look elsewhere, and teenagers won't get hired, period. There's just too much liability for the restaurateur," says National Restaurant Association Director Jackie Trujillo, executive vice chairman and president of operations for Harman Management Corporation in Los Altos, California. Her company subfranchises 242 KFC units in California, Colorado, Utah and Washington.

State vs. federal law

DOL's Operation Child Watch underscored the confusion employers experience over whether they are covered by state or federal teen-labor laws.

The answer can be tricky: Federal law covers businesses that grossed at least $362,500 per year at the end of March 1990 or that have gross sales of more than $500,000 per year today. Federal law also covers any individual employee—regardless of the employer's size—who is involved in interstate commerce. State rules generally cover smaller businesses, but some provisions may apply to large companies as well, in cases where these state provisions are more "beneficial" to the employee than federal law—that is, when state laws are stricter.

When DOL inspectors came knocking last year during the agency's Operation Child Watch, many foodservice operators who thought they were in compliance with the law got a rude shock: They *were* in compliance—but with the wrong law. Numerous operators were following state labor laws, when in many cases they should have been following more restrictive federal rules.

The existence of two separate sets of laws governing the hours that teens can work has been confusing to foodservice operators, especially in states where state labor officials have done more than their federal counterparts to get the word out on state law. "State and federal laws are not in sync. It's hard to know which one to follow," says Neil Shook, owner of Hartman's Two Family Restaurant in Nazareth, Pennsylvania.

Shook's home state of Pennsylvania, for example, imposes limits on the hours that 16 and 17-year-olds may work. Federal law does not. And Pennsylvania allows workers under 16 years of age who are not covered by federal law to work until 10 p.m. during the summer, instead of the federal limit of 9 p.m. In addition, Pennsylvania requires employers to give employees under 18 a 30-minute work break by the time the employee has worked five consecutive hours in one day.

Confused? You're not alone. And the government has not done a good job of explaining which laws employers must follow. According to Ed Lump, executive vice president of the Wisconsin Restaurant Association (WRA), employers who contact federal and state departments of labor regularly get conflicting information on which law applies to their business. "Businesses are operating in the dark, and that's the reason a lot of people end up violating the law,"

Teenage foodservice workers learn on-the-job skills that are an important introduction to success in the working world.

says Lump, who co-chairs a teen-employment task force set up this year by the National Restaurant Association and state restaurant associations.

Restaurateurs in some states are taking action. Lump and the WRA recently led a successful campaign in Wisconsin to convince the state to include information on state and federal teen-labor laws on the back of work permits.

Outdated laws pose problem

Federal teen-employment laws crafted decades ago have become outdated and irrelevant for many of today's workplaces. Many laws have not been changed for more than 50 years.

"The National Restaurant Association condemns abusive work situations," says Mark Gorman. "But an important element of improving compliance with the law is establishing more reasonable rules. The changes we are seeking still protect young workers while making rules more sensible for employers and employees."

One of the most problematic regulations is the 7 p.m. limit on working hours for 14 and 15-year-olds during the school year. The rule leaves foodservice operators with a tough choice: Hire workers under age 16 and be prepared to have them punch out in the middle of the dinner rush or else don't hire them at all.

"It's ridiculous that kids can't work after 7 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays," says Doris Lang, manager of Eby's Pines in Bristol, Indiana. Lang, who sometimes employs as many as 50 workers under age 18, says arbitrary hour limits force teenagers out of work and into less productive pursuits. "They don't go home. They just go next door to the roller-skating rink," she says. "Everyone is concerned about drugs and alcohol, yet few seem to realize that if these kids are actively involved in improving their skills and self-esteem on the job, they are less likely to fall into undesirable habits."

Pennsylvania restaurateur Shook agrees that work can be a productive way for teens to spend their time. "I know many parents who want me to hire their kids so they know where they are," he says.

Shook employs about 100 workers, and about 30 of them are under age 18. "These kids want to work," says Shook. "It's hard to get them to punch out on time before the magic hour of seven o'clock comes, because they don't want to give up their hours. I get busy working during the dinner rush, and it's hard for me to remember to make them leave. But if I don't, I could be in big trouble."

The fear of such trouble is forcing restaurant operators to reevaluate the risks and benefits of hiring teens. Lang, for example, is one of many operators who say they have stopped hiring 14 and 15-year-olds because of the inflexible hours restrictions. "The people who make these laws should realize that now the kids who I would have hired and who wanted to work are without jobs," Lang says.

Kitchen rules need changing

Operators are also having problems with federal regulations that prohibit teens from performing certain kitchen duties.

One provision of federal law, for example, says that workers under age 16 may cook only at lunch counters and soda fountains—a holdover from when the laws were passed in the 1950s and 1960s, a time of drugstore soda fountains and dime-store lunch counters. At that time, "restaurant" cooking was seen as too hazardous for young workers.

Restaurants have changed and so should the rules, the National Restaurant Association argues.

Another rule, termed Hazardous Order 10, prohibits restaurant workers under age 18 from using power-driven meat slicers. The regulation, created in 1952, was originally intended to protect teens who worked in meat-processing plants from dangerous slaughtering machinery. In 1962 DOL applied the provision to retailers and has since taken the position that "retailers" include foodservice establishments. However, DOL made the decision without any evidence or studies showing that food slicers are actually hazardous to teens in the foodservice setting.

Jobs are good for teens

The difficulties faced in reforming teen-labor rules show the power of the rhetoric that complicates the issue today.

Restaurateurs are working to combat the impression that work is bad for kids. Harman Management's Trujillo, testifying before Congress in March about the value of jobs for teens, told senators that she started her foodservice career 38 years ago as a teenage carhop at the world's first Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise and worked her way up through jobs as a grill cook, assistant manager and store manager to her present post of operations president.

"If you're going to be successful, you need to learn how to deal with

people. Restaurants offer this experience. We teach teenagers responsibility and how to work with coworkers. Our employees always tell us that working here as a teenager was a positive experience," says Trujillo. Ninety percent of her corporation's store managers advanced from within Harman Management, Trujillo says.

Few studies specifically address the benefits of foodservice jobs for teens. However, Ivan Charner, director of the National Institute for Work and Learning, a nonprofit Washington DC research firm, has conducted extensive surveys of teens working in fast food.

Charner's research, conducted in 1982–83, shows that teens employed at surveyed fast food chains learned to complete tasks, deal with other people, work as part of a team, train employees and take responsibility.

"All of these skills are critical to success later in life," says Charner. His studies showed that the teen employees who seemed to gain the most from fast food employment were those most in need of skills, including teens from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, minorities and people with fewer years of schooling and poorer grades. "Fast food employment seemed especially to help the people who weren't learning these skills at home, in school or in the community," says Charner.

Operators recognize importance of education

Far from setting up roadblocks to interfere with the balance between

What is the law on teen labor?

The following guidelines highlight the federal child-labor laws. However, it is important to note that federal child-labor laws **do not** take precedence over state child-labor laws. Whenever a state standard differs from a federal standard, the more strict standard must be observed.

Minimum age for employment

The minimum age for employment is 14 years.

Restrictions on the employment of 14 and 15-year-olds

Hours and time restrictions

14 and 15-year-olds may not be employed:

- ☐ during school hours, except in Work Experience and Career Exploration programs;
- ☐ before 7 a.m. or after 7 p.m., except until 9 p.m. from June 1 through Labor Day (time depends on local standards);
- ☐ more than 3 hours per day on school days;
- ☐ more than 18 hours per week during school weeks;
- ☐ more than 8 hours per day on nonschool days; or
- ☐ more than 40 hours per week during nonschool weeks.

The above restrictions apply even if the child does not attend school.

Exceptions to hours and time restrictions

14 and 15-year-old enrollees in approved school-supervised and school-administered Work Experience and Career Exploration Programs (WECEP) may be employed:

- ☐ during school hours;
- ☐ for as many as 3 hours on a school day;
- ☐ for as many as 23 hours in a school week; and
- ☐ in occupations otherwise prohibited for which a variation has been granted by the DOL's Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division.

The State Educational Agency must obtain approval from such Administrator before operating a WECEP program.

Work restrictions

14 and 15-year-olds may not:

- ☐ maintain or repair machines or equipment;
- ☐ perform outside window washing that involves working from windowsills, or perform any work requiring the use of ladders, scaffolds or their substitutes;
- ☐ cook (except in an area not separated by partition and in the customer's view) or bake;
- ☐ operate, set up, adjust, clean, oil or repair power-driven food slicers or grinders, food choppers and cutters, or bakery-type mixers;
- ☐ work in freezers or meat coolers or perform any work in preparation of meats for sale (except wrapping, sealing, labeling, weighing, pricing and stocking, when performed in other areas);
- ☐ load or unload trucks, railroad cars or conveyors; or
- ☐ engage in occupations in warehouses, except office or clerical work.

Exemption from the regulations

There are no time and hours restrictions for children under the age of 16 years who work for their parents.

Restrictions on the employment of 16 and 17-year-olds

There are no hours or time restrictions on 16 and 17-year-olds. Workers aged 16 and 17 may not, however, be employed in occupations declared particularly hazardous by the Secretary of Labor. The principal occupations in the foodservice industry that the Secretary of Labor has declared particularly hazardous are those involving the use of power-driven machines.

Hazardous Order 10 prohibits 16 and 17-year-olds from operating or cleaning power-driven meat-processing machines in retail or service establishments. The DOL has long taken the position that power-driven food slicers are power-driven meat-processing machines, regardless of how used, and thus the use or cleaning of such food slicers by 16 or 17-year-olds in a foodservice establishment is prohibited.

Hazardous Order 11 prohibits 16 and 17-year-olds from operating or cleaning most power-driven bakery machines. DOL has taken the position, however, that operation of pizza-dough rollers with a number of safety features would not be prohibited by Hazardous Order 11.

The DOL has also taken the position that the use by a 16 or 17-year-old of a dough mixer, even if used to mix potatoes, and a combination roll divider and rounder are prohibited.

Penalties

The Secretary of Labor may assess a civil penalty of up to $10,000 per violation.

—Richard C. Johnson, J.D.
General Counsel
National Restaurant Association

The 7 p.m. limit on working hours for 14 and 15-year-olds during the school year is a problem for both employers and teen workers.

work and school, restaurateurs are increasingly demonstrating that they want their young workers to stay in school and do well.

Burger King Corporation, for example, has been running a Crew Education Assistance Program (CEAP) in its company-owned stores since 1985, whereby Burger King contributes up to $2,000 over two years towards an employee's post-high-school tuition. Employees who complete at least three months of continuous service by working an average of at least 15 hours per week receive tuition money for each fiscal quarter they work. More than 100 colleges and universities have agreed to match Burger King's tuition contributions dollar for dollar.

Burger King provides the same college-tuition benefits to youths who are not in high school but who are working toward general-education degrees in preparation for higher education.

Burger King spokesperson Michael Evans says the program has been a valuable tool for recruiting and retaining teen employees. "The program sets us apart and gives students an incentive to stay with us," says Evans. About 2,000 students, 60 percent of them between 16 and 18 years old, are now participating in the program. About 8,000 Burger King employees have benefited from CEAP funds since 1985.

Putting education first

Many operators are also making efforts to communicate better with parents, teachers and teens to ease potential conflicts between work and school.

The Indiana Restaurant Association's "Education First" program, developed in conjunction with state labor and education officials, supplies operators with information on work permits, other teen-employment forms, and state and federal teen-labor laws.

Participating employers send postcard notices to schools and parents when they hire young workers, and they post "Education First" creeds to let customers and employees know that they consider education a young worker's first "job" and to show that the employers are committed to following teen-labor rules. "Education First" employers swap stories about the best ways to keep teens in the work force while encouraging them to do well in school. Examples include offering flexible work hours that take school activities into account and giving students incentives for making good grades.

Wendell Bias, owner of J's Dairy Inn in Liberty, Indiana, says posting his "Education First" creed has made his employees feel freer to speak up when they need to study. "It makes everyone more aware that I will be responsive to their needs," he says. Working with "Education First" has also strengthened his community ties, Bias says.

Set up in 1989, the "Education First" program now involves more than 850 restaurants employing more than 5,000 teens. The Wisconsin Restaurant Association recently adopted a similar program. Officials at the Indiana and Wisconsin associations hope other states will adopt the "Education First" model to improve relations with parents and teachers.

The National Restaurant Association approached the National Education Association (NEA) in April to put together a program similar to "Education First" on the national level.

NEA has already endorsed the guidelines drafted by the National Restaurant Association. The guidelines emphasize that foodservice operators are committed to complying with state and federal laws, believe education is a student's top priority and will take steps to encourage employees to do well in school. The National Restaurant Association plans to release these guidelines for interested association members to use in the coming school year.

Association proposes regulatory reforms

The National Restaurant Association has held numerous meetings over the past two years with congressional and DOL officials to explain how existing regulations need to be updated.

In March the association petitioned DOL Secretary Lynn Martin to make teen-labor rules easier for employers to follow, suggesting specific changes. Among the suggested reforms:

□ Adopt a 9 p.m. evening working limit for workers under 16 during the school year.

□ Expand working hours for workers under 16 during nonschool times, including summer months, holidays and vacation periods, and days not followed by school days (i.e., Fridays and Saturdays).

□ Allow cooking and baking by 14 and 15-year-olds, with certain restrictions.

□ Set up an equipment "standards board" to approve the use of equipment for teen workers.

□ Require DOL to print posters with state and federal laws, indicating which is applicable.

□ Require DOL to hold a series of educational meetings in each state every year.

DOL has promised to hear out foodservice operators' suggestions, and DOL Secretary Lynn Martin has tentatively agreed to meet with the association this year to discuss the foodservice industry's proposals for change. ❑

THE POWER OF EMPLOYEE TRAINING

THESE RESTAURATEURS ARE BELIEVERS

Two highly successful restaurateurs running vastly different establishments have discovered the same thing: Employee training is the key to success.

by Joan E. Herlong

For 22 years, Muriale's Restaurant in Fairmont, West Virginia, has been racking up annual sales gains of between 12 and 15 percent—a phenomenal rate of growth in a college town of about 27,000 people. Owner and operator Rocco Muriale oversees a staff of college-town employees who provide outstanding service and Italian-American fare in a comfortable, family-style setting.

Meanwhile, 2,000 miles away in Prescott, Arizona, an upscale restaurant run by owner Paul Murphy is doing amazing numbers through boom and bust—Murphy's Restaurant grosses more than $2 million a year in another small town of about 28,000 people, serving up fish, beef, wine and beer in a rustic Western setting. What else does Murphy's offer? The best-trained staff around, according to the owner.

Although the two operations differ greatly in check averages and menu offerings, they do have two things in common: phenomenal success and

◀ **Rocco Muriale has built a top-notch staff of young workers. "They make excellent tips because they've been trained so well," says Muriale.**

extraordinary employee training programs.

As Paul Murphy explains, "The reason I'm so fanatical about training is because I want my restaurant to be the *best* in the area, in all aspects—and it is. The evidence is in our gross sales and popularity. I started in the restaurant business when I was just a teenager. Working in the kitchen, I found you can't expect people to handle a knife or run equipment just right. You have to *train* them above and beyond."

Rocco Muriale became a training convert after visiting scores of restaurants "just to see how they do it and get some ideas." Muriale confesses, "I'm a restaurant freak. Every time I go to the National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago, I hit about 15 to 20 restaurants in about three days. Sometimes I stay for a meal; sometimes I just walk around a bit. The Lettuce Entertain You restaurants in the Chicago area have always been a big inspiration to me. About 12 years ago, it hit me that, while our staff has always been friendly, we needed a more formalized training program. Excellent service doesn't just happen; it has to be 'packaged' in a certain way."

The program at Muriale's

Formal training occurs every 10 days at Muriale's. "Usually, we show a film or have some kind of a talk focusing on a specific area. We are really big on training films. We use films from the National Restaurant Association, the Professional Waiter's School in Los Angeles, [the comedic actor] John Cleese, and also Pittsburgh Productions."

After showing a film, Muriale often moderates a question-and-answer period "just to make sure the point really gets across." Muriale adds, "Sometimes we will do role-playing, or I will give a talk on a specific subject. We are beginning to bring in outside speakers and consultants, too. Most training takes place at about 9 p.m., and the employees are paid for their time."

Muriale prefers to hire completely inexperienced employees, particularly for the waitstaff. "For most, this is their first job," he says. "I like that because they have no preconceived notion about how things should be done. I have been training 18 to 24-year-olds for 22 years, and I've been doing it this intensively for the last 12 years. I want them to know *my* standards. They make excellent tips for high-school and college students, and that's largely because they've been trained so well."

At Muriale's Restaurant, all waitstaff members start out as host staff. Hosting is also the training ground. "The only difference between working on the host staff and the waitstaff," notes Muriale, "is that the waitstaff is responsible for taking the order and bringing the food to the table. All other services, such as refilling drinks and busing the table, are performed by both."

"To people in this age group," continues Muriale, "many of the basics of hospitality are quite foreign. We have to continually remind employees of its importance. For example, in the initial greeting, it is so important to make eye contact with the customer. For a lot of kids this age, eye contact either doesn't occur to them, or it does not come naturally. They need to learn that these kinds of things are a big part of the service culture."

All employees receive ongoing training, but Muriale spends most of his training time on host and waitstaff, because they have the most customer contact. "They make the most important impression on the customer during 'the moments of truth.' Those first few moments are really vital," he emphasizes, "even though it's really a matter of simple courtesy: welcoming guests, seating them properly and chatting for just a few seconds. You can really tell a great restaurant from a so-so restaurant from that initial hospitality."

The last hurdle to moving up to waitstaff at Muriale's involves role-playing with the boss. "The final test is me," says Muriale. "Before being promoted to waitstaff from kitchen help, host staff or buser, they have to answer my questions about the beer and wine list, menu items, methods of preparation and what we want emphasized on the menu. They can't just answer the questions by rote. They have to truly articulate the information to me."

Formal training occurs every 10 days at Muriale's.

Training every day at Murphy's

At Murphy's, formal training meetings take place every day. "We have hundreds of sub-signatures," explains Murphy, "such as our own Irish coffee, our own Murphy's beer, 67 other beers, and our own bakery featuring different breads and desserts each day. We have to constantly train our people to stay abreast of those changes *daily*. We have two shifts—day and evening—and before each shift we gather waitstaff and maybe some cooks to explain promotions and specials."

All 100 employees at Murphy's attend a general meeting at least once every 45 days. Departmental meetings occur monthly, as do wine seminars, which are given by different wine makers or distributors. There is also a weekly management meeting, and all employees read the results of this meeting in the weekly newsletter written by the head hostess.

"The general meetings are more motivational," says Murphy. "Departmental meetings are more specific. For example, with waitstaff we might emphasize how we want the cup to sit in the saucer, or how much ice should be in the tea. At the wine seminars, I always insist they start with the basics."

Meetings can last up to two and a half hours, and employees are paid for their time. Murphy emphasizes that these training sessions are "al-

Paul Murphy makes his own training films: "I just went to K-Mart and bought a video camera with a tripod."

ways interactive and informal. I come to the meeting in sweats or shorts with a list of about 10 things I want to get across. We always let our staff make the needed changes, too, or the changes won't work."

Because his restaurant is upscale, Murphy prefers to hire experienced waitstaff. The average age of his waitstaff is about 26. Immediately upon hiring, new employees receive a training packet on which they will be tested later. The packet itself is about an inch-and-a-half thick.

Murphy admits, "The packet is totally overwhelming to them, but it conveys the seriousness of the job immediately. A lot of people think, 'Oh, I'll just wait tables until something decent opens up.' I don't *want* short-timers. I guess that's why only about 7 percent are actually hired out of our applicant pool."

At the end of a server's first day of Murphy's training, he or she is tested on the general manual (which he or she has had for at least three days). At the end of the third day, the server takes a table-numbers test. On the fourth day, there is a test on menu descriptions and abbreviations. On the fifth day, there is a computer test and portion-control test. On the sixth day, there is another computer test, plus a "PLU" or Price-Look-Up exam. The seventh day is a day of rest, so to speak, and the eighth day's test is on bar abbreviations and prices. When the would-be server has passed all these tests, he or she is "ready to go on the floor."

What is a passing grade? "I want all A's," insists Murphy. "They have to score a 92 or better on each test. But we do give a little bit of leeway. Some people just don't test well, so we give some latitude considering their actual floor performance. A trainee has to follow another waiter for two days, and then be followed for another two days. At the end of those four days, we know whether they can cut it. We want to make sure they are 100 percent ready before they wait on their first customer alone."

This training program may sound rather formal, but Murphy points out, "We do have strict rules, but we don't have robots. One of our mottos is 'We're going to make money, but have some fun at the same time.' "

Restaurateur and movie producer

Murphy also relies on training videos. Like the restaurant's breads and desserts, Murphy's training videos are homemade. "About 10 years ago," he recalls, "I just went to K-Mart and bought a video camera with a tripod. It's so easy to make my own that I don't buy or rent outside training films."

Murphy has made eight training videos, all of which he updates at least every six months. "They are pretty hokey," he allows, "but I admit that up front."

One film covers the general employee manual, featuring Murphy himself reading through and commenting on the manual. There are two separate films for waitstaffers—one for the day shift and one for the evening shift. Murphy has also made a film called "Eight Steps to Waiting Tables" for all hosts and waitstaffers. "Service Assistant" is a training video for busperson. "History and Philosophy of Murphy's" focuses on the restaurant's building, which is the oldest mercantile structure in Arizona, and its adopted motto, "All Goods Guaranteed to be First Class." Another film, "Sales and Selling," emphasizes techniques for selling more of Murphy's signature items.

The "Liquor Liability" video features Murphy simply explaining what liquor liability is. " 'Liquor Liability' is in some ways our most important training film," says Murphy. "It's the one tape every restaurateur should do if they only make one film."

Murphy's customized videos allow him to explain the little elements of service that are unique to his restaurant. "The videos are so specific to my way of running things. 'Eight Steps to Waiting Tables,' for example, is *our* way, but it may not fit another restaurant's way. There are so many specifics to running a good restaurant; and making your own training tapes is such an easy way to address those specifics," says Murphy.

What about the costs?

"Each training session costs me about $300," says Rocco Muriale, "but it's definitely worth every penny." Because Muriale himself is a major part of his ongoing training process, his time is a difficult "cost" to put into numbers.

Instead, he views his training time as an investment. "I spend my time at the restaurant pretty evenly on three main areas: training, food quality and sanitation," says Muriale. "I am not big on office work or spending a lot of time with salesmen."

Muriale is a consistent part of the ongoing training process, always there as a resource and backup. "Our training emphasizes team work," says Muriale, who plays the role of team captain. "People who come to my

restaurant expect to see me, and they do. Food and service are the lifeline of the business, so you will usually find me in the kitchen or out in the dining room."

"I have heard about 'empowering' the employees on the 'front line,' and I agree with that training philosophy, but not to the extent that the managers or the owner cop out on their responsibilities," he continues. "If the customer is not satisfied with, say, his lasagna, the waiter is trained to replace it right away. That's just common sense. But it is ultimately *my* responsibility to apologize to the customer, make sure he's had a pleasant meal, thank him for coming and invite him to come back."

For Paul Murphy, using homemade films slashes the cost of training—in both dollars and time spent. "The films alone save me over 200 management hours per year. I started doing the films about six years ago after I faced some facts about training. You can have fancy manuals, but they are worthless without consistency in presentation. Training is only as good as the manager's ability to present it, and consistency is key. With the films, the employees get *me*, making the same points in the same way for every employee who views the film."

"I'm fanatical about training because I want my restaurant to be the best in the area," says Paul Murphy.

Employee response

At Muriale's, employees enjoy the training and appreciate training's long-term effects as well. "They really enjoy the training movies," enthuses Rocco Muriale. "Movies are a really good medium for getting the point across to this age group. One of their favorites is from Pittsburgh Productions. It shows a couple who goes to dinner at the Restaurant from Hell—a completely awful experience. But then the whole thing is reenacted, with the same players spending the same amount of time with the customers, only everything is done right."

Muriale can always tell when his training program has begun to sink in with employees, and they appreciate what they are learning. As an example, Muriale offers, "One waiter came up to me the other night and said, 'I went to a restaurant last night and their service was *deplorable*.' After training, our servers really develop a new sense of what service should be from the customer's perspective.

"Many of my employees go on to college or graduate from college while they're with us," says Muriale, whose restaurant is located near Fairmont State College. "A lot of them have told me how much the training here has helped them personally. One young woman went on to become the manager of a health spa. She said that in her interviews they really stressed service, and she was able to show them she was more than prepared to take on that kind of responsibility."

Training at Muriale's is about more than just doing a good job and earning tips. "This is a young staff," says Muriale, "and role models are important to them. They learn a lot more than just how to walk up to a table. They learn about poise, stance, eye contact and social courtesy. These are things that will help them long after they've been with us. They really do appreciate it."

Paul Murphy constantly reinvents his training program and films based on the input of his employees. "Our long-term employees are always giving us feedback about the training program," says Murphy, "and we make a point of asking our new employees what they liked and didn't like about the training program they've just completed. We also do thorough exit interviews and get a lot of good information through those.

"Cross-training is also a very effective way to promote teamwork," adds Murphy. "We like our waitstaff to know a bit about what it's like to work in the kitchen. It makes an amazing difference when you take a server behind the bar and explain how it's organized and how orders are filled. When the server understands all this, the server and the bartender work together better and faster."

Customer response

"I don't actively promote our training to our customers," says Murphy, "but I know they must know about it. Excellent service completes the picture.

"I ask regular customers to let me know how a new server is doing, and then I just stay away. Our focus on excellent service must be obvious to our customers. When you emphasize service like we do, your nearest competitor is miles away."

"I don't actively promote our training or attention to service," says Rocco Muriale. But the response comes to Muriale in the form of comments from customers. "More than half of my business is regular customers, so they clearly appreciate it," says Muriale. "A lot of people tell me that the food is excellent, but the service is *superb*."

Joan Herlong is a writer in Greenville, South Carolina.

EMPLOYEE THEFT

TRACKING AND PROSECUTING PERPETRATORS OF ON-THE-JOB THEFT

Everyone knows that the best way to control employee theft is with prevention. But sometimes that's not enough. When dealing with a "bad apple" or a hard-core thief, a strong response may be called for to set a precedent: You may have to investigate and prosecute a criminal employee.

by Banning K. Lary

All the signs point to bad news: An audit reveals shortages in inventory. Cash is missing. Then, you receive a confidential tip from an employee. One of your employees—and maybe more than one—is a thief.

To discover that a trusted employee is ripping off the restaurant is disturbing, at the least. You feel hurt and betrayed. You want to lash out immediately and uncover the crooks. But you'd better wait. To act rashly could backfire if you terminate or accuse an innocent party who may later sue for wrongful discharge or false accusations. Quickly firing someone could also send the wrong message to other employees who are stealing. They may figure that getting fired would be the end of their troubles or that they should merely suspend their activities for a while. If management irrationally fires someone without any evidence, it further convinces thieves that the company is an easy mark, unschooled in methods of discovery and prosecution.

Relax for a moment when you first suspect internal theft. Take a deep breath. Realize that time is on your side. Vengeance is a dish best served cold. You must gather all the evidence you can before acting, so that you can best proceed within the constraints of company policy and the law. Proper gathering of evidence may require that you hire someone from outside as an investigator.

Gathering evidence

"Before any accusations are made, you want to be sure your evidence is in order," says Evan Foster, who runs Touchstone Research International, a Dallas firm specializing in internal theft and drug investigations for restaurants and hotels. "You want to have an ironclad case before you confront your suspect(s)."

Evidence basically comes in two different forms: documents and witnesses. Documents are usually the "paper trail" that tracks the flow of goods and cash through an operation. In the back of the house, these can be invoices, receiving reports and computer entries. In the front of the house, evidence may be dinner tickets, cash receipts and bar tabs.

Witnesses are the second type of evidence, and they are valuable because they possess knowledge of theft through firsthand observation or by overhearing others talk about it. Sometimes employees involved in a theft scheme will sicken of their actions and will want to "come clean" one day by telling you out of the blue that they have been stealing—perhaps before you even knew it was going on. But this is very rare. Other employees can become witnesses during the investigation process in exchange for certain kinds of immunity. More often than not, the prime witness is the suspect himself, who eventually confesses during a "confidential conversation."

Many restaurant owners mistakenly feel that honest employees will come forward and report theft, as they will not choose to work in a dishonest environment. The truth is, however, that honest employees will generally just leave.

It is probably true that in any organization 10 percent of the employees are impeccably honest and will not steal no matter what the circumstances. Conversely, 30 percent of the people will steal if given the opportunity. The remaining 60 percent might steal under the right set of circumstances. If a restaurant loses its honest employees by not stepping in and stopping ongoing thefts by employees, things will only get worse.

Employee thefts in a restaurant range in magnitude from what is commonly referred to as "grazing," whereby a foodservice worker will snack on the inventory throughout an entire shift, all the way up to organized and ongoing criminal theft of cash and merchandise that can, over time, add up to millions of dollars. To

Eric Westbrook

a restaurant operator, any kind of theft should be intolerable, and immediate steps should be taken to discover the problem and stop it. Employee theft is like cancer: the longer you wait or ignore it, the more it spreads.

Beginning the investigation

"Once an owner or operator discovers a loss, he is in control of the situation," says investigator Foster, "and the criminals are at a disadvantage." However, this is true only if the owner can keep cool and call an investigator who will put in someone undercover. "It's critical that we establish contact with the perpetrators who are committing the crimes."

Employees cannot know that an investigation is under way, and an owner or manager must not "telegraph" his feelings of betrayal. Business must go on as usual, and an owner must not discuss the investigation with anyone—not even a spouse.

"We had a case once," says Foster, "where the owner was telling his wife everything, and she was telling the maid. The maid didn't know it, but her boyfriend was the ringleader [of the stealing] who managed her boss' business. Everything the owner told his wife got back to the ringleader through the maid, and it took six months before we could figure out that our countermeasures were being subverted through a leak next to the owner."

Another key point is that an investigation must begin immediately, as soon as inventory figures or profit ratios begin to change. Many times a restaurant owner will think the problem is in the paperwork. Not wanting to believe that employees could be thieves, the owner inadvertently perpetuates the problem. By confronting the problem directly, an owner can locate a paper mistake and correct it before it can multiply—or, if necessary, hire a firm to begin an undercover investigation.

Going undercover

Undercover personnel must enter an establishment through normal hiring channels like any other employee. Otherwise they will be suspected. Because thieves usually occupy positions of mobility, undercover personnel are rarely hired in static positions (like a cook) where their work activities are confined to one area of the restaurant. The undercover person needs to have access to all phases of the operation and must gain trust on all levels.

An undercover investigation usually goes through several well-defined stages, according to Foster.

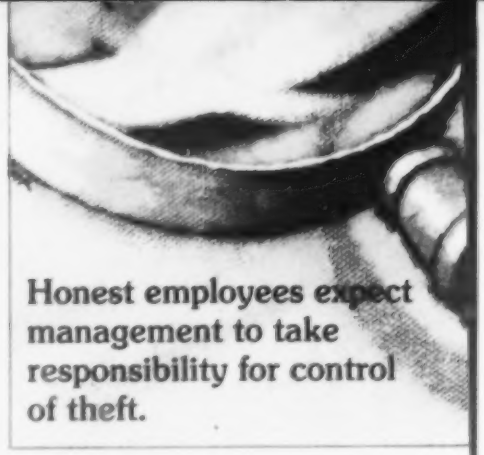
"During the first month, the operative is not asking any questions, not spooking anybody, just learning his job," says Foster. "He (or she) is picking up a lot of general information that is very valuable to the restaurant owner about such things as morale, supervision, productivity and customer service. The undercover operative is also building a rapport with other employees through 'after work' activities like having lunch together or a beer after work."

One of the first things undercover agents find on a typical investigation is drug usage among certain groups of employees. During a recent investigation to uncover problems with food cost at an Orlando, Florida, restaurant, Touchstone agents surprised management when they revealed that some employees were smoking marijuana outside during breaks, and other employees were using crack cocaine. These habits motivated the theft of filets mignons and cases of Dom Perignon champagne. Even silverware was stolen—sometimes to obtain drugs, sometimes out of pure greed.

As is standard practice among restaurant investigators, Touchstone agents write daily reports that cover 350 areas of operation—from safety and security to customer satisfaction. These handwritten diaries report every event from opening to closing and are forwarded to headquarters. Typewritten weekly reports are then sent to the restaurant owner's home for review.

"One of the hardest things for the business owner to do is to read these weekly reports and not react," says Foster. "There is a real temptation to go in and try to straighten the problem out."

Most undercover programs require



Honest employees expect management to take responsibility for control of theft.

that the owners give assurances that they will not interfere or react in any way to the information until the investigation is finished. "If the owner reacts prematurely after we've found 50 percent of the problem, we never get the other 50 percent," Foster says.

Obtaining documentation

Once the investigator locates the sources of employee theft, the next phase includes placing pinhole cameras in the ceilings to monitor activity at the cash registers, over the bar, outside the back door and refrigerator doors, and in the parking lot and other key access areas. These cameras are attached to long-play recorders that produce powerful evidence that can be used in obtaining confessions and in court.

"Then, when we go to court, it's not my undercover investigator testifying. It's me and one of my general investigators and the videotapes," Foster says. "The identity of the undercover agent is preserved for future operations.

"We will never trap an employee. We never set the stage for an employee to steal, because then we wouldn't know if it was the first time that person had stolen," says Foster. "We use a technique called 'roping,' whereby we get close to an employee by being interested in things he's interested in and get in step with him. Then he opens the doors for us."

Undercover agents receive extensive training in body language and personality recognition. Once an agent can frame up who a person is, it becomes a kind of psychological cat-and-mouse game, particularly with those people who are hard-core thieves.

Hard-core thieves differ from the casual "grazer." Hard-core thieves wake up every morning with the idea that they are going to profit from theft

against their employer. They are constantly on guard for somebody who may be trying to uncover their activity. To gain their confidence without spooking them is the trade of the skilled investigator.

Once the undercover investigation has obtained a complete profile of every individual in the organization and videotaped the illicit activity, a meeting is held with the owner. This usually takes place after 60, 90 or 120 days. At this meeting, thieves who steal food are then classified in two categories: those who take food home and those who steal to sell.

The interrogation

In some cases the investigative team will conduct what is called a "shrinkage review" survey. Surprise is important; all the restaurant employees are summoned together without prior notice. They are then addressed by an investigator (one who is not undercover) who tells them that theft has been going on and that they are being given a chance to cooperate voluntarily. Questionnaires containing every employee's name and a list of questions are then passed out to all employees. Employees are given 12 to 24 hours to anonymously complete the surveys and drop them into a designated locked box.

These surveys have questions like, "Have you ever observed anyone high or intoxicated on the job?" or "Have you ever observed another employee stealing food or merchandise?" Honest respondents can then anonymously report activity that has been bothering them. Answers provided in this candid, comfortable and confidential manner often produce startling profiles that were previously unknown to management.

When all this has been put together, the investigative team goes into an interview and interrogation posture. Those employees found to be good and honest receive a simple interview to see if they will or can provide additional information. Employees identified as having participated in theft receive interrogation with the goal of obtaining a confession.

When presented with the evidence, 85 to 90 percent of the perpetrators will confess verbally to their illicit activities. Offenders are then asked to write and sign a summary of the confession in their own words. If the confession is lengthy, a court reporter can be employed to transcribe dialogue into a typed report. These statements can then be presented to a grand jury for purposes of obtaining an indictment, even though confessions generally contain only 10 to 20 percent of what actually occurred.

Pursuing prosecution

"When you are gathering evidence, what you are doing is putting together packages of felony theft," says Foster, who recommends prosecution in every case of employee stealing. "I would think the last message an owner wants to send is that you can steal here and all that is going to happen to you is that you'll lose your job."

In a typical restaurant-theft case, an employee admits to or is convicted of stealing about $7,300 in either cash or merchandise. If the theft is the employee's first offense, the employee is usually placed on probation. The court may order the offender to make restitution to the employer. Repeat offenders are dealt with more severely and can receive prison terms.

Seeking recovery

As a general statement, a $20,000 loss case with a 90-day undercover operation, followed by surveillance, interrogations and evidence presented to a grand jury can cost a restaurateur $8,000 to $10,000. Investigations are not cheap, but they are effective. They also can help a restaurant owner recover his losses through a "fidelity bond" rider on a general liability insurance policy.

Fidelity bonding is a very inexpen-

Preventing merchandise theft

Spell out from the start what you consider to be theft in your operation. These are the most common types of internal theft that eat away at the bottom line.

1. Grazing. In its most common form, grazing occurs when cooks and servers "snack" on prepared food during the course of their shifts. *Solution:* Establish a firm policy of no eating except on break and provide employees with a designated eating area away from kitchen and customers.

2. Overcooking. Chefs may be tempted to cook too much food if employees are allowed to take unsold food home after closing. *Solution:* Disallow taking food home and insist that unsold cooked food be given to charity or thrown away.

3. "Sweethearting." Servers sometimes take extra food to the tables of friends, family or big tippers without writing it down on the bill. *Solution:* Do periodic checks, especially if a server is overly friendly to a customer or if a customer always asks for a certain server. The best solution is to install a computer system in which every item that leaves the kitchen is in the paper trail.

4. Trash stash. Employees may try to steal food or merchandise by putting it in the trash and throwing it away outside, only to return later to pick it up. This usually occurs just before a shift change or at closing. *Solution:* Institute periodic inspections of trash areas and install closed-circuit cameras at the back door and fence dumpster areas. Allow key access only, restrict parking at the back of the restaurant, and inspect boxes and bags carried out by employees.

5. Delivery theft. Delivery theft can occur any time the restaurant receives inventory, and it can occur in many ways: straight theft of goods, shortages on delivery, improper invoicing, inaccurate counting and receiving, damaged goods, returns and trades. Delivery theft can be perpetrated by the delivery driver, by the restaurant receiver or through a collusion of both. *Solution:* A fully integrated computer system is the best way to quickly locate trouble spots. Receiving reports must never be made by the same person who writes the checks for the goods, without stringent checks and balances. Deliveries must always be verified in total and compared against the shipping papers and invoices.

sive kind of insurance that is offered by most companies as a blanket protection against loss, including theft by employees. The key to recovery on such a policy is the documentation that the investigation company can provide through confessions and evidence in the books. A typical fidelity bond costs about $1,000 a year for $100,000 coverage with a $1,000 deductible.

"Fidelity bonding is dirt-cheap insurance for what it offers the restaurant owner by way of protection," says Foster. He says that Touchstone investigations have recovered more than $2.5 million for clients through fidelity bonding insurance since 1982. An investigative agency usually takes a percentage of the recovered amount in addition to their standard fee.

Internal theft prevention

The best way to deal with employee theft problems is to eliminate, or drastically reduce, the likelihood of thefts through good employee screening programs and through good inventory and accounting controls.

Pre-employment screening gives the owner an opportunity to address problems *before* a person is hired, by stating company policies and procedures about theft, drugs and alcohol. Many companies require new employees to sign a statement attesting to the fact that they have received orientation and that they know what will happen if they breach policy. These forms are kept on hand to support evidence in case of a later incidence of theft.

Preventing opportunities to steal, both in the back office and in the front of an operation, are critical to controlling internal theft losses. Integrated computer systems that record every transaction within a restaurant—from inventory to payroll—are rapidly gaining acceptance as management's best "watchdog."

One of the keys to curbing theft is to define on paper what theft is. Simply tell employees that actions such as grazing and overpouring by bartenders are considered theft in your restaurant.

There is no substitute for constantly reminding employees to follow security procedures. Good security training and orientation includes putting employees on notice that you are aware of the points of security vulnerability in your restaurant and that you will deal with infractions swiftly and surely.

No one likes to have to deal with employee theft, but it's part of restaurant management. By instituting strong antitheft measures, by hiring carefully and by aggressively pursuing those who steal, your restaurant will become known as a place where stealing is not tolerated. Remember that honest employees expect management to take responsibility for control of theft and to set the right example. As one employee said after a successful investigation: "I'm so glad you did this, because I was going to quit." ❑

Banning K. Lary is a writer and producer of documentary training videos on white-collar crime. He lives in Austin, Texas.

Preventing cash theft

Cash losses can be far greater than merchandise losses, especially if perpetrated by supervisors, managers or bookkeepers who control inventory and paperwork. Separation of accounting duties (recording, disbursements and reconciliation) is essential to maintaining a good system of internal controls. Most cash thefts are variations of the following activities.

1. "No Sale." Using this method, the bartender or cashier pockets the cash after being paid for food or beverage service with cash and rings "No Sale" on the cash register. Sometimes the perpetrator will leave the extra cash in the register until the end of a shift and take it out en masse. *Solution:* Use spot checks periodically on all bartenders and cashiers by freezing a cash drawer and doing a quick audit. "No Sale" theft will equal cash in drawer less opening balance plus sales. You can also set the register to require management approval before using the "No Sale" key.

2. Coupon theft. The popular "two-for-one entree" coupons used in advertising promotions can be clipped from newspapers by waiters or waitresses who turn them in after pocketing the cost of an entree when a customer pays in cash. *Solution:* Management should constantly verify coupon use during promotions by having servers report coupon use as it occurs.

3. Rebate-check theft. Sometimes when a supplier sends a rebate or refund check to a restaurant, a dishonest manager may use it to replace cash that is accounted for on a bank deposit, and subsequently the manager takes the cash. *Solution:* Excessive orders, returns and refunds can be a clue that a theft cycle may be in operation. Instruct suppliers to mail rebate checks to a corporate office or other location beyond the reach of managers.

4. Bank-deposit theft. A bank deposit theft may occur in conjunction with a manager's disappearance, whereby an entire deposit may be stolen. Or, a manager may "kite" a deposit, stealing cash from today's receipts and making the deposit one day late, covering the amount with tomorrow's cash receipts. Deposits may also be "shortened," especially when proper sales-recording controls are not in place. *Solutions:* Have a second employee always present to verify that a deposit is correct. Insist on deposits being made daily or twice daily. Schedule your deposit pick-up service to come also on weekends. Instruct the bank to notify you if a deposit is skipped or not made according to your usual schedule.

5. Embezzlement. Embezzlement can occur anytime one person controls one or more accounting functions. A bookkeeper who makes the deposits, pays the bills and reconciles the accounts can victimize a restaurant in many ways: writing checks to himself or herself or to bogus employees; writing checks to dummy vendors; stealing patrons' checks written to "cash"; or paying for personal goods and services out of the company account. The variety of these schemes is endless. *Solutions:* Never allow one person to control all accounting functions. Conduct periodic audits by outside sources. Insist that key employees in bookkeeping and management take regular vacations; embezzlement schemes often require daily maintenance and can be detected when the employee is away.

SIX WAYS TO REDUCE EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

Wouldn't it be nice to go several months without having to offer an orientation session to any new employees? Direct some effort toward employee retention and the dream could come true.

by Bill Stevens

The average tableservice restaurant has about 43 employees, yet ends up replacing a total of 52 people per year because of turnover. If you consider that it costs about $1,050 to train a worker before he or she is up to speed, the result is $54,600 (52 × $1,050) spent each year on training that is the result of turnover. Could you stand to keep $54,600 more this year?

It seems that more attention is being paid today to portion control than to recruiting, hiring, training and inspiring employees. Turnover will never be eliminated, but it can easily be cut in half by paying attention to six key principles.

Key #1: Hire only the best people. Although it sounds obvious, this is an increasingly difficult step as the supply of available talent continues to dwindle.

□ Don't ever hire just "a body" to fill a slot. You can't afford to. They'll hurt you and cost you money.

□ Stop making it easy to get hired. Make it an achievement.

□ Advertise for "nice people." Look for intelligence, personality, a sense of urgency and a history of hard work.

□ Evaluate applicants by imagining them as potential managers. If they don't fit that description, don't hire them.

□ Involve the entire staff in the hiring process.

Key #2: Provide continuous learning opportunities. Research shows a direct correlation between training and retention.

□ Start with Day One. Ask new employees what they want to learn, and teach them every aspect of the business they are willing to take on.

□ Consider providing tuition assistance for employees, their children or grandchildren, based on length of service and hours worked.

□ Take employees to trade conventions.

Key #3: Let employees "own" their jobs. Nobody who rents a car goes to the trouble of washing it. The same notion applies to a job. Let employees act like owners. Tell them the contribution they are expected to make. Then provide resources and let the employee figure out the best way to do the job.

Instead of giving Ernie the dishwasher a long list of duties (scrape the plates into the garbage can, stack plates here, etc.), put him in charge of "making it the shiniest, most sparkling kitchen in the state." Let him decide what detergent to buy. Give him a small budget to buy his own supplies. Let employees solve problems that interest them, within a well-defined area. Expand the area as they show responsibility.

Consider giving each employee a set of business cards the first day on the job.

Key #4: Communicate. Be available. Walk around. Many managers are seen as distant and inaccessible to employees, especially when differences are magnified by cultural gaps. Be visible. Listen to what people are saying.

□ Have lunch with one staff member each week. Ask for his or her ideas. Report back on their ideas.

□ Give employees access to you any time they need it. Drop everything and give them your attention.

□ Regularly wait on tables, bus dishes and assist (not boss) the cooking staff, just to stay in touch with what workers experience every day.

□ Conduct employee focus groups of five to seven people. Ask two questions: (1) What are we doing that you like? (2) What could we do better?

Key #5: Develop a sense of community. Have fun. Successful operations, almost without exception, talk like and act like a family or community. Sometimes community members do fight among themselves. They also resolve differences together, have fun together and pull toward the same objectives.

□ Hold periodic brag sessions with lots of applause and praise.

□ Hold contests between locations or groups to see who can come up with the most ideas for getting new customers.

□ Fund a "fun committee" to schedule parties, ball games and picnics.

□ Find an excuse to celebrate something once a week.

□ Resolve every grievance within 24 hours, if possible.

Key #6: Give recognition and acknowledgment. According to Mary Kay Ash, the successful entrepreneur behind Mary Kay Cosmetics, "There are two things people want more than sex or money: recognition and acknowledgment." Recognition and acknowledgment build loyalty.

□ Turn a small sum of money over to a "recognition committee." Set performance criteria for behaviors you want to reward and let employees administer the committee.

□ Pass out "Ya Done Good" stickers to anyone you see doing something that helps toward a goal.

Will these tips work? You won't know until you try. If reducing turnover by one worker will add $1,050 in profit, it might be worth a try. ❑

Bill Stevens is a speaker, seminar leader and consultant on employee and customer retention. He is the director of the Center for Value-Added Management in Greenfield, Wisconsin.

I·N·C·A G

The grains quinoa (pronounced *keen*-wa) and amaranth held honored positions for hundreds of years in the Inca empire stretching for 2,500 miles in the Andean highlands of South America. Every year the emperor broke ground with a golden spade to plant the first quinoa (meaning "mother grain") seed of the growing season. The inhabitants of Cuzco, Peru's ancient Inca capital, worshiped entombed quinoa seeds as the source that gave birth to their city.

These two Inca grains have rested in relative obscurity for 400 years and are just now coming into health-food stores and restaurants—and North American farmers have begun to grow them. North Americans are rediscovering the "heritage" foods that sustained the Indians.

Sam Arnold, food historian and owner of The Fort restaurant in Morrison, Colorado, says quinoa is "fun to eat because it's like eating balls of caviar." Felipe Rojas-Lombardi, a Peruvian who is executive chef of New York City's The Ballroom (a dinner theater) and also executive chef at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons, says, "My customers think I give them rare yellow caviar when I offer it as a garnish with fish. Quinoa is not something you have to educate your palate to like. At Columbia University the doctors call it 'the steak of the Andes.' My customers clean their plates. That's the best compliment," he says.

David Schnorr, president of the Southern California-based Quinoa Corporation, calls it "superior to all other grains. Chefs can let their imaginations go with quinoa. You can take five recipes from newspapers every week and add quinoa. People are delighted with the taste and intrigued by something they've never had. I can count on one hand those who instantly didn't like it."

Paul New of the White Mountain Farm in Mosca, Colorado, 7,600 feet high up in the San Luis Valley, grows 450 acres of quinoa. "I think it's one of the more promising foods of the future. I'm encouraged by its taste, and it's inexpensive to grow," says New.

"It's more versatile than any food I've ever worked with, including wheat, oats, barley and beans. Its leaves can be eaten like spinach or raw in salads like lettuce. There's nothing it can't be used in, from Mexican-style to Chinese-style foods."

Agronomist Duane Johnson of Colorado State University calls quinoa "virtually the perfect protein. If you had your choice of one food to survive on, this would be the best."

Quinoa contains more calcium than milk, twice as much protein as rice and three times the phosphorus of bananas. Its grains average 17 percent protein, but can contain up to 23 percent—more than twice the level in common cereal grains.

But the crucial difference is the quality of the protein. Quinoa contains nearly the ideal balance of amino acids, similar to the protein constituents found in milk. In addition, quinoa is a good source of B vitamins, vitamin E and minerals. For example, quinoa has more than three times as much calcium and twice as much phosphorus as wheat. It's a high-fiber food with no cholesterol and can be used as a meat substitute. It is, however, high in oil and fat.

Quinoa shares wild rice's soft, crunchy consistency and its nutty flavor. Because it's low in gluten, people who cannot eat wheat products can enjoy it. It can be substituted for rice in all dishes.

Native South Americans laboriously gather quinoa in remote Andean villages of Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Colombia, Chile and Argentina. It remains the staple of millions of Inca descendants. In some areas quinoa almost approaches a monoculture equaling the importance the buffalo once occupied for the Plains Indians of North America.

South Americans prepare quinoa into a cereal, prepare it like rice or make it into flour for bread and biscuits. They eat the leaves like a vegetable or give them to animals. They burn the dried stalks for fuel. And the quinoa saponin residue is used as shampoo. Quinoa is even fermented into a drink called *chicha*.

The Quinoa Corporation imports and sells quinoa grain, flour and pasta. "Our business has doubled every year," says David Schnorr.

Quinoa is now grown commercially in North America and Great Britain. It is easy to cultivate, because it grows where little else does.

Women of the Andean highlands winnow quinoa. This versatile grain is popping up on U.S. menus.

QUINOA SUPER SALAD

Yield: 7 cups

Ingredients:
5 cups quinoa, cooked
1 cup carrots, chopped
¾ cup parsley, minced
1 cup sunflower seeds
4 cloves garlic, minced
¼ cup olive oil
¼ cup soy sauce
½ cup lemon juice
4 tomatoes
14 black olives

Method:
Cook quinoa, let cool. Add carrots, parsley, sunflower seeds and garlic to quinoa. Mix thoroughly. Combine liquids, pour over quinoa and toss well. Garnish with tomato wedges and olives.

—Courtesy of White Mountain Farm

Nutritional analysis per ½ cup serving: 343 calories, 11 grams protein, 48 grams carbohydrate, 13 grams fat, 323 mg. sodium, 0 mg. cholesterol

·R·A·I·N·S

by Carolyn Hughes Crowley

Quinoa expands three to four times when cooked and requires only about half the cooking time of rice—about 12 minutes. Before cooking, quinoa should be sifted through by hand to pick out bits of twig or other debris. And quinoa should be rinsed well in cold water until the water runs clear to remove the saponin, a toxic substance in the seed coating that forms a soapy solution in water. Farmers don't have to rely on insecticides to protect quinoa, because the bitter-tasting saponin prevents insect and bird predation. Saponin may also be helpful in shielding the grain from intense ultraviolet radiation in high elevations.

The basic quinoa recipe is the same as for rice—two parts water to one part quinoa. During boiling, quinoa swells and turns transparent. The minuscule white bands that circle each grain's midsection separate from the firm seeds, so the cooked product resembles a panful of crescent-moon spirals, glistening like tiny jewels.

Quinoa can be served in salads, soups, chowders and stews, and as breakfast cereals, finger foods and main-dish casseroles. It can be served as a side dish with meats, poultry and fish, and as flour in breads, rolls, crackers, cakes and cookies. Quinoa can be found in natural food stores, at gourmet and specialty stores, and at many supermarkets for $1.50 to $4.50 a pound.

The definitive book about this grain is Rebecca Wood's *Quinoa: The Supergrain*, published by Japan Publications in New York.

Photo courtesy of Quinoa Corporation

s they have for hundreds of years. Now the

Amaranth

Amaranth is perhaps the oldest food crop in the Americas. This seedlike grain dates back almost 8,000 years. Like quinoa, it was a staple of the Incas. They ground the seed and mixed it with honey or human blood to fashion icons which they ate at temple ceremonies or at family gatherings.

In its native habitat today, amaranth is in short supply. Amaranth plantings are small, but astounding, considering that 10 years ago the plant had all but vanished. In the ancient Inca language that people still speak in the Andes, it is called *kiwicha* (pronounced kee-*wee*-cha).

Amaranth is one of the prettiest crops on earth, bearing stunning purple, red and gold leaves, stems and flowers. A field of amaranth looks like it's ablaze.

"It's an exciting, breathtaking crop that people can see for miles," says Gene Sanders, a Dalton, Nebraska, farmer. "That beautiful field of red is just overwhelming."

Amaranth is higher in calcium and phosphorus than any other grain except millet, and amaranth contains about 16 percent protein, making it a protein powerhouse. It also boasts a high proportion of lysine, an essential amino acid rarely found in vegetable matter.

For a snack, Bernard Meehan, chef at Washington DC's Cosmos Club, dumps enough amaranth in a pan to cover the bottom and cooks it with no oil. It pops almost immediately and tastes like a nutty-flavored popcorn, he says. These popped seeds are light and crisp and can be used as a snack, as a cold cereal with milk and honey, and as a breading on chicken or other meat.

Amaranth is half as expensive as quinoa and doesn't need to be washed. It resembles sesame seed and has a nutty taste. It can be used in breakfast cereals or as an ingredient in confections. It can be milled to produce a sweet, light-colored flour suitable for biscuits, breads and cakes.

For making yeast-raised breads or other leavened foods, amaranth must be blended with wheat meal or wheat flour, because it lacks functional gluten. Blends of 80 percent wheat and 20 percent amaranth give normal leavening to breads.

In such blends, the high lysine content of amaranth probably improves the protein quality of foods that normally would be made from flours of other grains such as corn, rice or wheat. ❑

Carolyn Hughes Crowley is a writer in Washington DC.

TOASTED AMARANTH ROLLS

Yield: 12 rolls

Ingredients:
1½ cups lukewarm water
1½ Tbs. vegetable oil
3 Tbs. honey or maple syrup
1½ tspn. salt (optional)
1½ Tbs. active dry yeast
1 cup amaranth flour
2¼ cup whole wheat flour
(Soft butter, honey, cinnamon, chopped nuts, raisins, dried lemon peel, toasted amaranth seeds—optional)

Mix first five ingredients together, then stir in flours. Roll dough onto a lightly floured surface (about ¼ inch thick). If using optional ingredients, spread dough with butter and sprinkle with remaining ingredients, except amaranth seeds. Toast seeds in a dry skillet until lightly browned. Roll up dough and slice 2 inches thick. Place on sides, close together in an oiled pan. Sprinkle with amaranth seeds and bake at 350° for 30 to 40 minutes.

—Courtesy of Arrowhead Flour Mills

Nutritional analysis per roll without optional ingredients: 114 calories, 4 grams protein, 21 grams carbohydrate, 2 grams fat, 4 mg. sodium, 0 mg. cholesterol

AVOID THE PAIN

PREVENTING BACK INJURIES ON THE JOB

Everyone knows someone who has had the agonizing experience of "throwing out a back"—perhaps it's been you or one of your employees. These painful injuries are common among restaurant workers, and the results are lost work days, decreased productivity and doctor bills that may hurt as much as the injury. Keep your operation from being hobbled by spinal troubles by learning the basics of back safety in the restaurant.

by Bill Lauretti, D.C.

"It felt like someone stabbed me in the back with a butcher knife." Cindy's face was contorted with pain the day she walked into my office seeking help for her back. Her eyes were damp with tears, and she spoke slowly through gritted teeth. "I don't understand it. All I did was bend over to pick up a case of wine. Then I heard a pop in my back, and I doubled over from the pain. I haven't been able to straighten up since."

Cindy was young and athletic. She told me how much she enjoyed aerobics when she had time off from her job as assistant manager at a large restaurant. But on that day, she was bent forward like an old woman, and I had to help her walk into the examination room. She explained that there had been a late rush in the cocktail lounge the night before, and she had helped the bartenders restock the wine. When she had bent down to lift a case of wine from the floor, she felt a sudden pain that doubled her over. That's what brought her into my chiropractic office that day, still in agony.

As it turned out, Cindy's back injury wasn't very serious. When she had picked up the case of wine, the sudden bending and twisting had misaligned one of the bones in her lower back. That was the "pop" she heard. That sent the powerful back and buttock muscles into a painful spasm. We began her on a treatment program, and she was back to work in a couple of days. With a little more treatment and her enthusiastic participation in a home exercise program, she was completely free of back pain within two weeks.

The back-pain epidemic

Cindy always thought of herself as strong and healthy—she never thought she could injure her back so painfully from such a minor incident. But what happened to Cindy happens to 400,000 American workers every year, many of whom work in the foodservice industry. According to the National Safety Council, back injuries are by far the most common and most costly on-the-job accidents. Back injuries account for one-fifth of all workers' injuries and one-third of the total amount of all disability compensation paid. The average back-injury claim costs more than $7,500 for medical and indemnity payments. As common and as disabling as back injuries are, the real tragedy is that most of these injuries could be prevented with a little knowledge and some common sense.

Taking care of your back

If you understand a few simple principles about how the back works, you'll be better able to educate and motivate your staff to avoid most back injuries. Here are a few of the most important "back basics":

1. Don't bend forward from the waist. When lifting, stand with your feet spread shoulder-width apart. Put one foot slightly forward for a wide base of support. Keep your head facing forward, keep your back straight and bend with your knees instead of

Back-saving tips for restaurant workers

BENDING

The wrong way
Bending forward from your waist with your knees straight puts hundreds of pounds of pressure on your lower back. Bending this way almost guarantees that you'll hurt your back sooner or later.

The right way
Bend and lift by keeping your back straight and your head up. Bend your knees instead of bending forward from the waist. Use the strong muscles of your legs to lift with, instead of making your back do all the work.

PUSHING

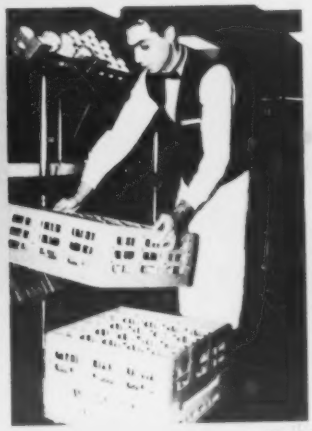
The wrong way
Carelessly moving a heavy load on wheels (like a hot box or a cart) can easily result in a back injury. It's usually safer to push a load than to pull it. Don't pull or jerk a cart quickly, and don't bend over and twist to move a cart out of an awkward space.

The right way
Spread your feet wide apart, with one foot in front of the other and with the forward knee bent. Keep your back straight and get a firm grip on the cart. Use your body weight to slowly lean into the cart, and use your legs to push forward smoothly and slowly. Don't rush or shove.

LIFTING

The wrong way
Lifting and carrying trays can be risky, even for experienced servers. Don't overload trays, and make sure the load is well balanced and secure. Don't bend forward from the waist to lift a tray. Don't carry trays over slick floors or loose carpeting.

The right way
Face the tray sideways and squat down low with your feet spread apart to get your shoulder under the tray. Slide it off the jack slowly onto one hand and shoulder. Once the load is secure, use your leg muscles to slowly lift your body and the tray upward, while keeping your back straight.



TWISTING

The wrong way
One of the worst things you can do to your back is twist while you're bending forward, such as when loading a dolly or a hand truck. Twisting puts the maximum amount of stress on your back. If you twist and bend forward, you're putting stress on your back when it is at its weakest. It's a dangerous combination that causes wear and tear that may eventually result in injury.

The right way
Instead of bending and twisting at the same time, think of them as two separate motions. First lift the load, using the techniques discussed above. Then, rather than twisting from the waist, place one foot in front of the other and use the front foot to step in the direction you need to turn. Use the back foot as you pivot. This lets your legs do the work, instead of your back.

from the waist and hips. The idea is to use the strong muscles of your legs when lifting, instead of using the back muscles that are injured so easily. Use these principles every time you lift, whether you're lifting a 50-pound sack of potatoes or just a skillet. Lifting improperly puts excess wear and tear on your back, which can eventually catch up with you and lead to an injury.

2. Don't bend and twist. The combination of bending and twisting is one of the worst things you can do for your back and probably causes more back injuries than any other kind of motion. If you need to move something from in front of you to one side of you (for example, unloading a dish dolly or a hand truck), move your feet instead of twisting from the waist. Place one foot slightly in front of the other and pivot on the back foot while moving your front foot. This allows your whole upper and lower body to move as a unit from side to side, instead of putting all the stress of twisting on your lower back.

3. When lifting and carrying, keep the load close to your body. When you carry something, think about "hugging" the load. Hold it tightly with both arms a little above waist level. Holding a 40-pound case of liquor at arm's length while bending forward puts hundreds of pounds of pressure on the lower back. Holding it close to your body's center of gravity will reduce that pressure greatly and will give you greater control over the load.

4. Avoid sudden motions. Before you bend down to lift something, plan in advance how to minimize the stress on your back. Be sure you have a good grip on the load and stand where you have secure footing. Lift slowly, smoothly and evenly; don't jerk or rush.

5. Keep the workplace safe. Use common sense in the work environment. Make sure tile floors aren't greasy or slippery from water spills or too much wax. Clean up cluttered areas. Make shoes with nonslip rubber soles a part of workers' uniforms whenever possible.

6. Lead a healthy life. Remember, your back is attached to the rest of your body. If you're overweight, out of shape and you eat poorly, your chances of injuring your back are greatly increased. Even smoking increases the risk of a back injury. The best protection against back pain is staying in good physical condition; work on developing strong abdominal muscles and flexible, supple back muscles.

Dealing with a back injury

If you or someone on your crew suffers a back injury, there are some immediate steps you can take to minimize the damage and give some relief. First of all, if there's any possibility of broken bones or spinal cord injury (such as from a bad fall), it's very important to leave the injured worker exactly where he or she is and call an ambulance immediately.

If someone has "thrown out" his or her back from overexertion or careless lifting, the best first aid is an ice pack or a plastic bag filled with ice cubes. Wrap the ice pack with a thin bar towel or a cloth napkin that has been moistened with warm water and put it on the painful area. This will cool the skin gradually, and in about five minutes it will begin to numb the pain. Immediately putting ice on an injured back may reduce damage to the muscles and joints, and helps speed healing. The ice should be applied for 20 minutes out of every hour for the first 24 hours after the injury occurs.

If the pain is severe, if there's weakness or numbness in the legs or feet, or if the pain lasts more than 24 hours, professional help is needed. Choose a health professional who's a specialist in back pain. Some family doctors don't see many cases of back pain and don't have much training or experience in treating it. Your back specialist should understand the physical demands of the restaurant business but should also be dedicated to returning the injured worker to the job as quickly as possible. Recent research has shown that more than a week of bed rest can actually do more harm than good for most back injuries.

When the injured worker returns to the job, be willing and able to honor any job restrictions the doctor has recommended. It may be a few weeks before the worker can lift and carry things again. He or she may need to be assigned to jobs that are less stressful to the back. For example, the injured person may need to serve as a cashier, a host or a performer of light food prep. Avoid assigning the person any jobs that involve lifting or bending. It may take some time for someone who's had a back injury to get up to full speed again, so don't push the person too hard. It doesn't take much to reinjure a back that hasn't healed properly. Remember, a seriously injured back can lead to a lifetime of pain and disability.

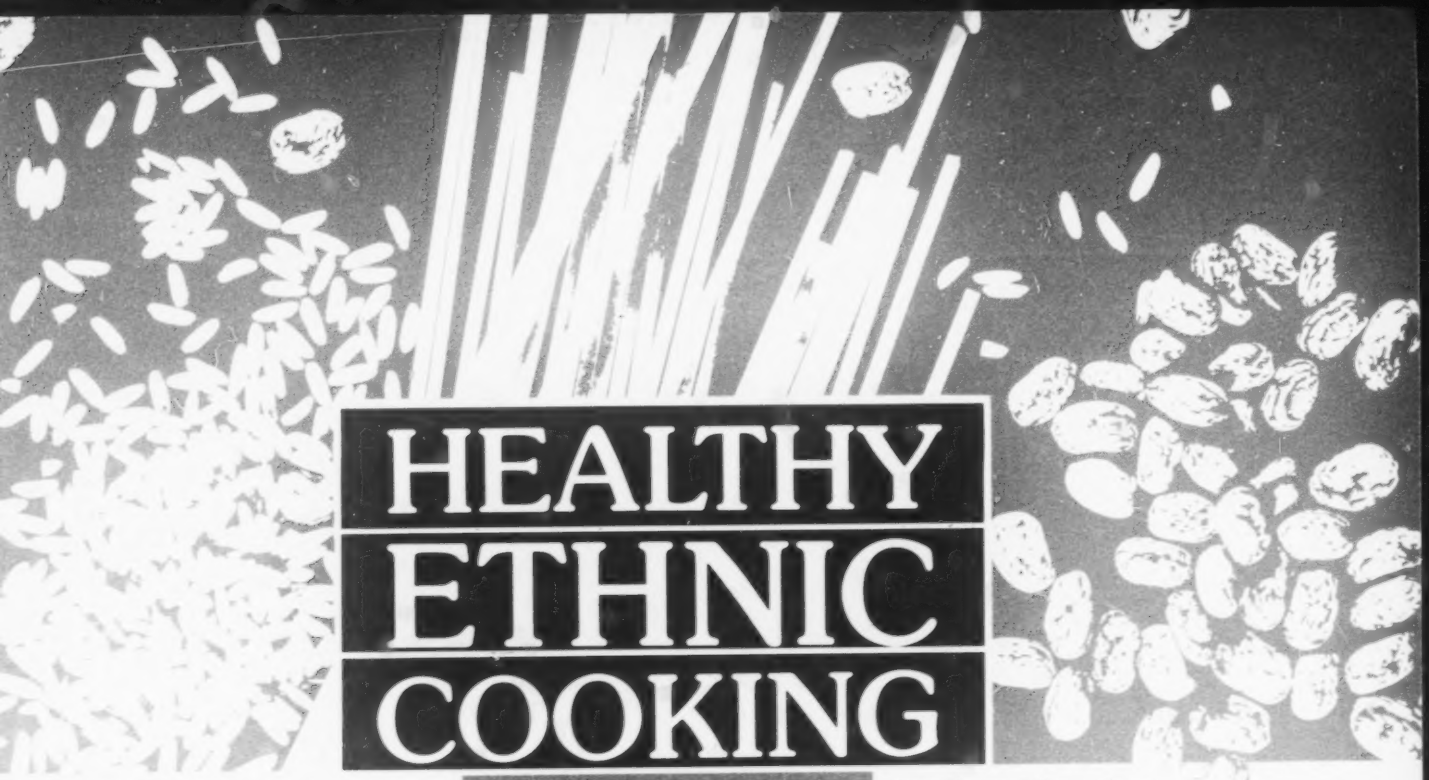
Prevention is the key

Your back is a complex piece of equipment. To work properly, it depends upon the precise alignment of bones, the smooth motion of joints and the powerful actions of muscles. As with expensive restaurant equipment, if you take care of your back, it will reward you with trouble-free service. But unlike your equipment, you won't be able to replace your back at any price if you use your back carelessly and cause permanent damage.

Make back-safety awareness a priority in your restaurant. If you educate your workers to prevent back injuries, you'll soon find that the effort will pay dividends many times over—in fewer costly injuries, increased productivity and a happier, healthier staff. ❑

To remind employees to be careful on the job, you may want to post safety reminders in the kitchen or other work areas. The National Restaurant Association has available for purchase a chart called "Proper Lifting Procedures" that illustrates the safe way to lift. The three-color, 8½-by-11 inch chart is available to members for $3.50 and to nonmembers for $7. Send payment to Publications Department, National Restaurant Association, 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. Call (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960 for credit-card orders and ask for publication PB541.

Bill Lauretti is a chiropractor specializing in the treatment of neck and back injuries in the Washington DC area. He spent more than 10 years in the restaurant and hospitality business.



HEALTHY ETHNIC COOKING

Returning dishes to their ethnic roots can add both nutrition and authenticity.

by Diane Welland, M.S., R.D.

Chinese stir-fry, Mexican tacos, Italian pasta. Once upon a time these items were found only in ethnic restaurants. Today, ethnic dishes are almost as likely to be found on a typical American menu.

But ethnic foods as we know them are not always considered healthful. Many times, that is because ethnic dishes have undergone changes to accommodate North American palates. To appeal to customers interested in both health and adventurous eating, chefs might consider returning ethnic dishes to their roots.

The health connection

"Most ethnic foods are basically healthy," says Hope Warshaw, a dietitian and the author of *The Restaurant Companion: A Guide to Healthier Eating Out*. "That's because authentic ethnic foods focus less on protein. In the past, meat wasn't as available as it is now, so people just naturally filled up on carbohydrates.

"American society is very protein-oriented," says Warshaw, "and dishes high in protein—especially meat and cheese—tend to be high in fat." Americanized versions of ethnic dishes often emphasize meat, and therefore they tend to be high in fat. Most authentic ethnic foods, on the other hand, emphasize starches and vegetables.

Take, for example, the Americanized version of sweet-and-sour chicken. Chunks of chicken are typically battered, deep-fried and then covered in a heavy, sweet sauce. There are often few or no vegetables. A more authentic meal would use less meat and more vegetables, perhaps stir-frying or sauteing the chicken pieces with plenty of Chinese vegetables and finishing off the dish with a light hoisin sauce. A typical Americanized sweet-and-sour chicken dish can contain more than 45 percent fat, while a more authentic Chinese version can have well below 30 percent fat.

Vegetarian dishes play a larger role in other countries' cuisines than they do here in America. Food staples in other cultures tend to be carbohydrates. For example, most dishes in the top three traditional ethnic cuisines focus on starches: rice, noodles, pasta, beans and corn.

For foodservice operators wishing to add low-fat ethnic dishes to the menu, the steps are simple: Avoid Americanized versions of ethnic dishes and cut the fat by using lower-fat ingredients. Below are descriptions of the three most popular ethnic cuisines and what makes them healthy. Included are tips on how to add authentic and healthful ethnic food to any menu.

Chinese changes

The typical diet of a person in China contains only 15 percent fat, which is less than half the fat in the average U.S. diet (which often includes about 35 percent of calories from fat). Chinese people consume more than 70 percent of their calories from complex carbohydrates, mainly in the form of rice and noodles, and only 10 to 11 percent of their calories are from protein. (Americans eat about 45 percent carbohydrates and 15 to 20 percent protein.) The type of protein consumed is different, too. Protein sources in China are predominantly of plant origin, whereas Americans concentrate on animal protein. These are the facts revealed by an eight-year study conducted by T. Colin Campbell of Cornell University. According to Campbell, differences in total diet help explain why Chinese people have far lower rates of heart disease and cancer than the average American does.

Dietitian Joy Kirkpatrick, co-author of *The Guiltless Gourmet Goes Ethnic*, says Chinese cooking is a boon for nutrition-minded individuals. "Chinese food is basically healthy, if prepared properly," says Kirkpatrick.

With only a few modifications, the restaurateur or chef wishing to appeal to health-conscious customers can

CHICKEN CHOW-CHOW

Yield: 1 serving

Ingredients:
4 ozs. boneless, skinless chicken breast, julienned
1½ ozs. bok choy, julienned
1 oz. water chestnuts, sliced
1½ ozs. bean sprouts, raw
1½ ozs. mushrooms, sliced
1½ ozs. snow peas
1 oz. bamboo shoots
1 oz. diced red pepper
1 Tbs. olive or peanut oil
1 Tbs. sesame seed oil
6 ozs. chicken stock, homemade without salt; or low-sodium canned chicken broth
½ Tbs. cornstarch
1 oz. water
4 ozs. dry buckwheat soba noodles

Method:
Cook noodles in boiling water until tender. Strain and set aside. In separate bowl, combine cornstarch and water to make a slurry. Set aside. Heat wok or saute pan over high heat. Add oils to wok. Add chicken, and stir-fry briefly till cooked through. Then add all the vegetables, quickly stir-frying. Pour chicken stock over chicken-vegetable mixture. Bring to a boil. Then add cornstarch slurry and cook until thickened. Season as desired. Serve over warm noodles with soy sauce on the side.

—Courtesy of Stephen Ford, Executive Chef, Wellshire Inn, Denver

Nutritional analysis per serving: 979 calories, 55 grams protein, 109 grams carbohydrate, 36 grams fat, 163 mg. sodium, 96 mg. cholesterol

turn high-fat, Americanized versions of Chinese meals into lower-fat, authentic items. Here's how:

Stir-fry or steam foods. "Stir-frying and steaming, rather than frying, are great ways to make healthful Chinese food," says Kirkpatrick. Broiling is another. Steaming rice or dumplings rather than frying is a good way to lighten up an Oriental meal while adding bulk. Low in fat and calories, steamed Chinese vegetables are a colorful addition to any plate.

For executive chef Stephen Ford of the Wellshire Inn in Denver, Chinese-influenced cooking definitely has a healthy edge and takes little work to prepare. "Asian-style cooking is easy, because the food is basically healthy already. All you do is throw it in a wok and add lots of vegetables."

Reduce salty ingredients. Chi-

nese food is known for its high sodium content. However, with a little effort this can be substantially reduced. Commercial low-sodium or light soy sauces and chicken broths are readily available. The trick is not to use too much sauce. Lightly flavoring with a dash or two of soy sauce right before serving is usually all that is needed for a dish to be complete.

Another option is to increase the amount of Chinese spices used. Garlic, ginger and hot spices like chilies add flavor and can easily take the place of more salty ingredients.

Focus on rice and noodles. "Wonton skins and noodles are excellent sources of complex carbohydrates, as long as they are not deep-fried," says Kirkpatrick. Lo mein dishes and wonton soup are good examples of these kinds of meals. They usually have little meat and plenty of noodles and vegetables.

Stephen Ford's chicken and vegetable chow-chows combine all three guidelines. These chow-chows are among the most popular dishes with the Wellshire Inn's clientele.

For the chicken chow-chow, a mixture of chicken and Chinese vegetables is stir-fried in a wok and served over a bountiful portion of Chinese noodles. "Because we use lots of vegetables and noodles, we don't need much meat," says Ford. "We use only four ounces of chicken, but our portions are still large."

Ford also serves the soy sauce judiciously—none is added during cooking. "We serve light soy sauce as an accompaniment at the table. This way the customer can add it to taste," notes Ford. For those who are particularly concerned about health, steamed rice or soba noodles may be substituted for the Chinese egg noodles.

Chinese people in China typically eat rice or noodles and vegetables three times a day—that is, at every meal. While the U.S. public may not be ready for such drastic dietary changes, many customers are ready to experiment with more diverse, more authentic and more nutritious ethnic foods. "Americans are broadening their tastes and have become more accepting," says Orlan Jennings, director of research and development for Shoney's restaurants

GUILTLESS REFRIED BEANS

Yield: 6 servings

Ingredients:
2 cups cooked pinto beans, including bean juice
½ tspn. chili powder

Method:
Cook beans with water or broth, onion, celery and garlic. Do not strain.

Spray a heavy skillet with nonstick spray and heat. Add beans and bean juice, mashing and stirring beans until desired consistency. Add chili powder. Stir to mix.

Nutritional analysis per serving: 80 calories, 5 grams protein, 15 grams carbohydrate, trace amount of fat, 7 mg. sodium, 0 mg. cholesterol

GUILTLESS REFRIED BEAN BURRITOS

Yield: 4 burritos

Ingredients:
4 flour tortillas
1⅓ cups Guiltless Refried Beans
or
⅔ cups beans plus 4 ozs. cooked sirloin steak, trimmed, or skinless chicken breast, shredded
Salsa

Method:
Heat beans or meat until hot. Heat tortillas one at a time on griddle or top of stove (gas range). They can also be steamed. Place ¼ of hot beans or meat mixture onto tortilla. Add salsa, fold and roll into burrito shape.

—From The Guiltless Gourmet Goes Ethnic
by Judy Gilliard and Joy Kirkpatrick

Nutritional analysis per serving: 152 calories, 8 grams protein, 29 grams carbohydrate, 1 gram fat, 24 mg. sodium, 0 mg. cholesterol

based in Nashville, Tennessee. Shoney's has added some ethnic items to its basic American menu in direct response to consumer demand. "Our Chinese stir-frys in particular have been very successful," says Jennings.

Italian ideas

Italian food is a mainstay in the American diet, but authentic Italian food is just beginning to show up in some establishments. Rich in beans and grains, traditional Mediterranean cooking consists of about 55 to 60

percent complex carbohydrates. Pasta, polenta, garbanzo beans and cannellini beans have long been staples in the Italian kitchen. And although their levels of fat intake are similar, people in the Mediterranean have been found to have lower cholesterol levels than people in the United States.

According to Warshaw's book, *The Restaurant Companion*, Italians eat pasta with almost every meal, and salad is an important component of the meal. As the second course, the meat dish follows the pasta and is only a small part of the total meal.

When it comes to fat, however, olive oil is the primary culprit in Italian cooking. "Basically, olive oil is better than butter, but that doesn't mean it is always healthy," says Warshaw. "Pesto sauce is better than fettucine Alfredo, but it [pesto sauce] is still high in fat."

Pasta itself has little if any fat. The biggest problem is what is put on the pasta. Sauces in general tend to be high in fat. How do you take the fat out without sacrificing flavor?

Offer meatless pasta sauces. Simple marinara sauces are the easiest and the most well known types of sauce to prepare, but restaurateurs wanting to offer more exciting meatless sauces need only experiment with different low-fat ingredients. For example, the Wellshire Inn in Denver serves flavored marinara sauces using herbs and spices. One tomato-based sauce uses ancho chilies, capers, olive oil, lemon juice, basil and garlic. Vegetable sauces and wine sauces, such as mushroom or marsala sauce, are another alternative. In general, fish sauces like red and white clam sauce or putanesca are also good additions on a low-fat menu.

Reduce amounts of butter and cream. Cream sauces are a popular item in the American-Italian repertoire. There are two ways to lighten up these sinful sauces: Decrease the amount of butter and cream used, and substitute low-fat ingredients such as low-fat skim milk and margarine for the butter and cream.

Take, for example, the American-Italian version of fettucine Alfredo made with eggs, butter, cream and parmesan cheese. One portion of this rich meal can contain up to 27 grams of fat, with 56 percent of calories from fat.* By modifying the cream sauce to include skim milk, flour and a small amount of margarine; by reducing the amount of parmesan cheese; and by adding some vegetables such as broccoli and mushrooms for extra fiber and color, this meal's fat content can be cut in half.

Frank Cunetto, president of the family-owned Cunetto House of Pasta restaurant in St. Louis, offers six different low-sodium, low-cholesterol pastas to his customers. "The healthy items are mainly pasta with vegetables," says Cunetto. "Instead of cream and butter, we use no-cholesterol margarine and olive oil. We also season with spices, because we don't add any salt or cheese."

Use low-fat cheeses. Low-fat mozzarella and part-skim ricotta cheese are two commonly used cheeses that at times cannot be distinguished from their high-fat counterparts. Pizza, parmigiana and lasagna are particularly good candidates for low-fat cheeses. Shoney's Italian lasagna is a light side entree made with cottage cheese and part-skim mozzarella cheese. With only 10 grams of fat, this lasagna gets only about 30 percent of its calories from fat.

But for some operators, whole-milk cheeses may still be the preferred choice. Stephen Ford is one chef who would use smaller amounts of whole-milk cheese rather than opt for larger quantities of low-fat cheese. Using sharp, intensely flavored cheeses is another way to cut back. Parmesan or Romano cheese sprinkled over a dish at the last moment lends a finishing touch to the meal in addition to adding flavor.

Avoid using fatty meats. Meat sauces, although higher in fat than marinara sauces, do not have to be off limits when offering nutritious alternatives. Most of the fat in a tomato-based meat sauce comes from the high-fat ground beef frequently added to the sauce.

To lower the fat content, choose leaner meats such as 90 percent lean ground beef or ground round. More adventurous foodservice operators may substitute ground turkey, ground chicken or a mixture of both in lieu of beef. In all cases, the amount of meat included in a dish makes a difference. One or two ounces of meat per serving is usually all that is needed for flavoring a meat sauce. If using meat in an entree such as cannelloni, double the amount to about three or four ounces.

SPAGHETTI WITH BROCCOLI, PINE NUTS AND PARMESAN

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

Ingredients:
1 large bunch broccoli (about 2 lbs), broken into florets
2 Tbs. olive oil
2 large garlic cloves, minced or pressed
1 Tbs. pine nuts
¾ lb. whole wheat spaghetti
3 Tbs. chopped fresh parsley
¼ cup Parmesan cheese, freshly grated
Salt and freshly ground pepper or red pepper flakes

Method:
Steam broccoli for 5 to 10 minutes, until crisp-tender. Refresh under cold water and set aside. Bring a large pot of water to a boil.

Meanwhile, heat 1 Tbs. of the olive oil in a wide heavy-bottomed skillet over low heat and gently saute the garlic and pine nuts until the garlic is golden. Add the broccoli and stir together over low heat until the broccoli is heated through. Set aside. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground pepper if desired.

When the water comes to a boil, add the remaining oil and the spaghetti. Cook the pasta al dente, drain and toss at once with the broccoli mixture, the parsley and the Parmesan cheese. Serve at once on warm plates.

—*From* Mediterranean Light
by Martha Rose Shulman

Nutritional analysis per serving: 377 calories, 18 grams protein, 62 grams carbohydrate, 9 grams fat, 143 mg. sodium, 5 mg. cholesterol

Mexican modifications

Contrary to popular belief, authentic Mexican food is low in fat and calories. That's because the traditional Mexican diet primarily consists of dried beans supplemented with meat, fish, poultry and eggs. Corn products (particularly tortillas) and rice are the main staples, and chilies are served at

almost every meal. Milk products are not as common, either.

Americanized Mexican food, on the other hand, is laden with cheese and lard. Refried beans, deep-fried tortillas and nachos covered in cheese are standard Mexican-American fare that is drenched in fat. For example, one cheese enchilada can exceed 60 percent fat and one chicken tamale may exceed 70 percent fat.* Even a "Mexican salad," although composed of basically healthful ingredients, is frequently topped with sour cream or guacamole and served in a large fried tortilla shell.

The key to offering nutritious Mexican food is to keep it simple. "Traditional Mexican cuisine is really light and fresh," says Horatio Lonsdale-Hands. He and partner Espartaco Borga are the proprietors of ZuZu, a health-oriented self-service restaurant serving handmade Mexican food in Dallas. The two decided to open the restaurant in 1989 after tiring of heavy, fat-laden Mexican-American food. The concept was such a success that today there are six units throughout the city.

"ZuZu uses lots of fresh Mexican herbs and chilies, and all our poultry dishes are marinated in a citrus-and-herb mixture and then grilled," says Lonsdale-Hands.

ZuZu's success proves that it is possible to create lighter and more authentic Mexican food without too much effort. Here are some tips on lightening up Mexican entrees:

Grill or bake items whenever possible. Flour or corn tortillas are frequently deep-fried. Try serving grilled or baked tortillas instead. "Steamed tortillas are easy for foodservice operators, sometimes easier than frying. All you need to do is roll and serve," says Joy Kirkpatrick.

Grilled meats are another alternative and a specialty at ZuZu. "Our grilled chicken is a big hit and is really very simple to make," says Lonsdale-Hands. The chicken is marinated overnight in lime juice, cilantro, rosemary, garlic, roasted chilies, achiote and olive oil, and then grilled for 45 minutes.

Offer black beans and rice instead of refried beans. Beans are naturally high in complex carbohydrates and fiber. But refried beans are frequently prepared with lard, making them fairly high in fat. Plain pinto or black beans with Mexican rice are a healthier choice and are customarily served as an accompaniment to many Mexican dishes.

It is also possible to cook dried beans and then refry them with only a little fat. In the cookbook *The Guiltless Gourmet Goes Ethnic*, co-author Kirkpatrick's recipe for refried beans uses no fat at all. Cooked pinto beans, bean juice and chili powder are simply mashed in a heavy skillet sprayed with a nonstick vegetable oil.

Serve high-fat items on the side. Offering guacamole and sour cream on the side lets your customers decide how much to include in their meals. Be careful with cheese, too. Cheeses like Monterey Jack are very high in fat. Although not usually offered on the side, it is possible to limit the quantity of cheese placed on an entree.

The proprietors of ZuZu use anejo cheese, a low-fat Mexican cheese, on all their meals. According to Lonsdale-Hands, anejo is similar to Monterey Jack but not as heavy.

Load up on fat-free items. Tomatoes, lettuce, onions and salsa are great plate fillers and contain no fat. Pay attention to presentation. At times, these foods seem thrown on the plate at the last minute. A full plate, neatly presented, will boost the visual joy of a Mexican meal.

Incorporate just a few of these ideas into your ethnic-food cooking, and you'll be on the way to nutritious authenticity. ❑

Diane Welland is manager/staff nutritionist at the National Restaurant Association.

*These values were obtained from *The International Cuisines Calorie Counter* by Densie Webb, M. Evans & Company, New York, 1990.

Book Corner

Learning to serve it up healthy

Ever wonder what the customer concerned about nutrition is really looking for when dining out?

According to Hope Warshaw, it depends on the type of restaurant. Warshaw is a dietitian and the author of *The Restaurant Companion: A Guide to Healthier Eating Out*, a book designed to teach the average consumer how to eat healthy when dining out.

Although written for health-conscious customers, the book can provide insight to foodservice operators who want to cater to this clientele—especially if the restaurant specializes in one type of cuisine.

Want to add something healthful and Chinese to the menu? Try offering shrimp with broccoli or chicken with vegetables, rather than sweet-and-sour chicken or crispy beef. Specializing in seafood? Make sure to include some blackened or barbecued dishes. Warshaw gives tips like these as she walks the reader through ethnic and not-so-ethnic menus found in American restaurants.

Each chapter explores the history and origin of a certain style of eating and gives practical advice on how to manage the menu. Particularly helpful for foodservice operators is a list of "red flag" and "green flag" words used on menus and a sample of a typical menu for each cuisine, with nutritionally preferred items noted.

The Restaurant Companion: A Guide to Healthier Eating Out is published by Surrey Books in Chicago and is available for $11.95 in paperback.

SHOULD YOU ADD THE 401(k) TO YOUR BENEFITS MENU?

A FINANCIAL ADVISER EXPLAINS WHY THIS EMPLOYEE BENEFIT IS SO POPULAR

by Christine H. Negley

In the never-ending quest to keep and attract employees, owners of foodservice businesses must constantly stay abreast of the latest in employee benefits. For an operation of any size, one of the best employee benefits an operator can provide is a vehicle for saving money—that's what a 401(k) plan does.

Perhaps your company already offers a 401(k) plan, and as an employee you've always wondered about it. Should you participate? A financial adviser explains how you might benefit.

Despite being named somewhat unceremoniously after a section of the Internal Revenue Code, the 401(k) plan has become an enormously popular and valuable employee benefit.

Why is the 401(k) such a juicy benefit? It allows employees to defer taxes on part of their salaries, usually until retirement, when the tax bite may be less. Currently, about 90 percent of Fortune 1000 companies sponsor 401(k)s or similar tax-deferred plans. In many cases, such a plan is offered in addition to a regular pension plan. Now many smaller companies are adopting the 401(k) as their main retirement program.

Employers find 401(k)s attractive because they can be an effective way to attract and keep talent while encouraging employees to increase personal investment in the benefits program. Some companies also use 401(k)s to encourage employees to invest in the company itself—to become a "part owner." Because the 401(k) is such a popular benefit, it can promote the image among employees that an employer is generous and caring. That can lead to increased worker morale and loyalty.

One of the advantages of a 401(k) plan from an employer's point of view is that the employee bears all the investment risk.

Nuts and bolts

Here's how a 401(k) works and how to get the most out of it—as either an employer or employee.

A 401(k) retirement plan allows you to defer paying taxes on a part of your salary, up to a limit of $8,475 in [illegible]. Taxes are not paid until the money is withdrawn, usually at retirement. Companies often limit contributions to about 7 percent of salary, but the Internal Revenue Code allows for the lesser of 15 percent or $8,475. In addition to the tax-deferred contributions, some plans allow employees to contribute after-tax dollars, on which only earnings are tax-deferred.

One of the most attractive features for employees is that the company may "match" contributions that an employee makes to the 401(k). It is not unusual for a company to match 50 cents for every dollar put in by an employee. This matching feature often generates increased participation in the plan by employees.

It sounds like an IRA . . .

How does a 401(k) differ from an Individual Retirement Account (IRA)? Both vehicles build tax-deferred nest eggs for retirement, but an IRA is not company-sponsored. Anyone can set up an IRA account and decide what investments to fund the account with.

In a business such as a restaurant, a 401(k) plan encourages employees to become involved—sometimes for the first time—in personal financial planning.

With a company-sponsored 401(k), the participant chooses from among the investment options the company selects.

At $2,000 per year, the IRA maximum tax-deferred contribution is much lower. Also, many people do not qualify for any tax deduction on their IRA contributions, and there is of course no employer-matching contribution with an IRA.

If a person can afford both, there is no reason to have to choose between an IRA and a 401(k); you can participate in both.

Where to invest

The 401(k) is not an investment itself; it is merely a vehicle for saving and investing. The employer decides which investment options to make available, and the employee chooses from among them. A typical 401(k) offers three or four of the following choices for investing:

- the employer's stock
- a stock mutual fund
- a balanced fund combining stocks and bonds
- a money-market fund, and
- a Guaranteed Investment Contract (GIC).

Stock index funds that shadow the movements of the overall stock market have gained popularity in recent years as an addition to existing 401(k) plans. Employers deciding what options to offer to participants should consider that perhaps 70 percent of the employees' dollars will be placed in relatively safe investments, such as a money-market fund or GIC. Employees tend to value safety when it comes to their retirement money. Many financial planners argue that investing in these safer investment instruments isn't worth giving up the potential price gains in stocks and bonds. Over long periods of time, stocks, for example, have tended to outperform fixed-rate investments such as GICs and certificates of deposit.

How much risk an individual should take with a 401(k) is always a tough question. It depends on the person's circumstances and length of time to retirement. A key point to remember is to diversify; a common mistake is not understanding that 401(k) decisions need to be made in concert with other investments.

Most employers sponsoring a 401(k) plan provide some background material on the investments. However, most employers do not (and should not) provide financial advice because of concerns about being held liable for the performance of investments.

Can the employee switch investments?

Most plans allow the participant to shift the investment mix of his or her contributions at least twice a year, usually in increments of 10 percent to 25 percent. This ability to switch among investments gives participants more flexibility and control. Employers should realize that the cost of administrating a plan increases with additional investment choices and switching.

Employees should check the written performance reports that 401(k) plans usually generate. Employees can check the newspaper for the performance of plans that use mutual funds as the investment instrument.

An employer who offers a 401(k) plan will have to contract with a provider to administer the program and carry out the investing. Employers should have regular consultations with their 401(k) provider in order to update performance. Communication is of the essence.

Getting your money out

Distributions from a 401(k) plan may be made without a tax penalty after age 59½, upon retirement or in the event of permanent disability. By age 70½, distributions must begin. Employees can take a lump-sum distribution, but many plans also provide for the purchase of an annuity or installment payments. These withdrawals are subject to regular income tax.

If the employee leaves for another job, the 401(k) balance can be transferred if the new employer accepts rollovers. The balance can also be moved to an IRA, or left with the old employer until the employee is ready to collect. Employers may want to provide exit counseling to employees who are leaving for another company or retiring. This is a good idea, because the 401(k) distribution is frequently the largest amount of money the employee has ever received. Sad to say, many people spend the money instead of rolling it into another plan.

Employees also have access to their money at all times either through withdrawals, which are taxed, or by taking out loans, which are not taxed. The IRS recently tightened guidelines that allow previously untaxed contributions to be withdrawn in certain "hardship" cases, such as medical expenses, college tuition or a mortgage for a home. Employees must prove that they have used up other financial resources before applying.

The bottom line

As a result of their popularity, 401(k)s now hold more than $100 billion in assets, although such plans have only been available for about a decade. Active accounts in 1989 held an average of $26,000, according to government figures. For many employees, this represents their largest "nest egg" and will create income in the future that may amount to far more than Social Security and other pension plans.

Yes, 401(k)s really do deliver. In a business such as a restaurant, a 401(k) plan encourages employees to become involved—sometimes for the first time—in personal financial planning. They also allow a small-business owner a chance to attract and retain good employees while avoiding much of the cost and liability found in traditional retirement plans. It could be a welcome addition to an operator's menu of benefits. ❑

Christine H. Negley is a certified financial planner in Chicago with the firm Stifel, Nicolaus and Company.

#119

A culinary sojourn

I suspect that few people ever have stopped to think of the role food has played in the naming of counties, cities and towns throughout the United States. A little while ago I was doing some map work, and it occurred to me that I could assemble a culinary itinerary based on the names and locations of real cities and counties in the nation. Come on along!

If we just wanted a lot to eat, we could probably do well in Harvest, Alabama; Cornucopia, Oregon; Feasterville, Pennsylvania; and Banquete, Texas.

If we wanted to start with a fruit appetizer, we could likely find a lot in Fruitland, Idaho; Fruitport, Michigan; and Fruitville, Florida. More specifically, I bet we could get dates in Dateland, Arizona; pears in Pearland, Texas; oranges in Orange, California (and also in New Jersey); peaches in Peach County, Georgia; cherries in Cherry Hill, New Jersey; cranberries in Cranberry, North Carolina; apples in Applegate, Oregon (or Appleton, Wisconsin); strawberries in Strawberry, Arkansas; lemons in Lemon Grove, California; and grapes in Grapevine, Texas.

Turning to meat and poultry, we most likely could find bacon in Bacon County, Georgia; lamb in Lamb County, Texas; and hamburger in several places including Hamburg, New York (along with Iowa, Arkansas, New Jersey, Oklahoma and Pennsylvania). They probably offer squab in Pigeon, Michigan; and turkey in both Turkey, Texas, and Turkey Creek, Louisiana. The hot dogs are terrific in Weiner, Arkansas; Franktown, Colorado; and Frankfort, Kentucky. I think I know what kind of steak we'd get in Salisbury, Maryland, and in sister cities in Massachusetts and Missouri.

If we wanted some game, we'd probably find buffalo in Buffalo, Wyoming (and New York and West Virginia as well); elk in Elk Point, South Dakota (and Elk County, Pennsylvania); and venison in White Deer, Pennsylvania. I'm not sure what we'd get if we ordered something in Hungry Horse, Montana.

If seafood is more to our liking, we'd find it in Pike County, Mississippi; Haddock, Georgia; in both Pollock and Bonita, Louisiana; Trout Run, Pennsylvania; Whitefish, Montana; White Salmon, Washington; and Crab Orchard, Tennessee (and also in West Virginia).

If we wanted to go light, we could have a sandwich in Sandwich, Illinois, or in Sandwich, Massachusetts.

Let's not overlook vegetables. We'd probably get good beans in Lima, Ohio, and in Lima, New York; tomatoes in Tomato, Arkansas; olives from Olive, California; corn from Maize, Kansas, and Cornstalk, West Virginia; rice from Riceville, Iowa (and Riceville, Tennessee; Rice County, Minnesota; and Rice Lake, Wisconsin).

We'd better order the right kind of salad in Cobb County, Georgia.

As for other dishes, we could probably get a variety of eggs in Egg Harbor, New Jersey, but we'd only get them one way in Benedict, Nebraska. We'd get hominy in Hominy, Oklahoma, and Hominy Falls, West Virginia. The honey is good in Honeyville, Utah, and they have great ribs in Rib Lake, Wisconsin. They may have only one kind of potato in Fries, Virginia, and one kind of pickle in Dill City, Oklahoma. There's good chili in Chili, New York, and turtle soup in Turtle Creek, Pennsylvania.

For beverages we could have mineral water from Mineral County, Nevada (and Montana); clear water from Eau Claire, Wisconsin; and cold water from Coldwater, Michigan. We could get coffee in Coffeeville, Alabama; cocoa in Cocoa, Florida; or a cola in Coke County, Texas. We could get a Manhattan in New York (also in Kansas). For wine, there's Galliano in Louisiana, and a brandy in Brandy Station, Virginia.

If we were still hungry, we could get a caramel in Carmel, California, and another in Carmel, New York. We could get a candy bar in Hershey, Pennsylvania, and in Hershey, Nebraska, and still more candy in Mounds, Illinois, and Mars Hill, Indiana.

For tableware, there's Fork, South Carolina, and China, Texas. After a trip like that, we'd probably wind up living in Chunky, Mississippi, or Stoutsville, Missouri.

Fisher's Law #119: When you travel, take the time to enjoy the food.

According to the experts at the Centers for Disease Control, you can't catch AIDS from food or social contact.

HAVE YOU PREPARED YOUR STAFF FOR THE ILLNESS OF A FELLOW WORKER?

To help ward off panic and the rumors it may breed, the National Restaurant Association has produced a pair of videotapes entitled ***The AIDS Issue.***

Also available is ***Basic Facts about AIDS for Foodservice Employees***, an 8-page pamphlet designed to calm unnecessary fear.

To order, call the Publications Department at the National Restaurant Association (800) 424-5156

The AIDS Issue: MG900
$32.95 for members
$36.25 for nonmembers
Basic Facts about AIDS: PB010
$1.25 for members
$1.65 for nonmembers

Fast food and moderately priced restaurants: consumers are more satisfied

A newly released association publication reveals that adult consumers are more satisfied with fast food restaurants and moderately priced, family-type tableservice restaurants** than they were five years ago. Also, one-half of consumers said they patronized a fast food restaurant once a week or more. More than four in 10 consumers frequented a moderately priced tableservice restaurant once a week or more.*

Convenience is critical to most consumers when they choose a fast food place, according to *Consumer Attitudes Toward Fast Food and Moderately Priced Family Restaurants*, a study based on a 1991 National Restaurant Association Gallup survey. In addition, survey results indicate that the industry is satisfying more consumers' convenience needs. In 1991, 65 percent of consumers reported they chose a fast food place rather than another type of restaurant when they were in a hurry, were busy, were concerned about the time factor or were looking for something that was more convenient.

In terms of convenience, 79 percent of adults reported in 1991 that they were satisfied with the convenience of not having to prepare the meal—a significant increase from the 71 percent who reported satisfaction with this aspect of convenience in 1986. Perhaps some of this increase is reflected in the proliferation of drive-thru and home delivery in recent years.

Satisfaction with another aspect of convenience—location—posted a significant gain as well. Apparently, more consumers are satisfied that fast food locations are convenient; more than three-fourths (77 percent) of consumers were satisfied with this aspect in 1991, compared with 71 percent in 1986. This suggests that the industry's expansion into locations in shopping malls, on highways and in office buildings (as well as their usual suburban and city sites) are meeting more consumers' needs for convenience.

Customers showed a relatively high degree of satisfaction with speed of service at fast food places and with their hours of operation. In 1991, 63 percent of consumers were satisfied

Reasons for visits to moderately priced tableservice restaurants, 1986 versus 1991

One-quarter of adult consumers chose a moderately priced, family-type tableservice restaurant because of convenience or a time factor

	Percent of adults reporting the reason	
Reason for visit	**1986**	**1991**
Night out/weekend evening	11%	15%
Less expensive	12	14
Convenient	6	13
In a hurry/busy/time factor	5	12
Family outing	14	10
Special occasions	11	9
With friends/guests	7	8
Better food/quality food	9	7

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Consumer Attitudes Toward Fast Food and Moderately Priced Family Restaurants*, 1991

Reasons for fast food visits, 1986 versus 1991

Convenience jumped in popularity as a reason for visiting a fast food restaurant

	Percent of adults reporting the reason	
Reason for visit	**1986**	**1991**
In a hurry/busy/time factor	52%	48%
More convenient	11	17
Shopping/travelling	12	14
Take children/grandchildren out	8	10
Lunch	N/A	9
Less expensive	8	9
Don't feel like cooking	8	6

N/A = Not available

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Consumer Attitudes Toward Fast Food and Moderately Priced Family Restaurants*, 1991

**A fast food restaurant is one at which food is ordered at a counter and there is no table service.*

***A moderately priced, family-type tableservice restaurant is one that provides waiter/waitress service and the average check size per person usually doesn't go much above $8.*

Satisfaction with aspects of fast food and moderately priced tableservice restaurants, 1986 versus 1991

Satisfaction among consumers grew significantly with regard to menu variety, convenience, cleanliness and atmosphere at both types of restaurants

	Fast food		Moderately priced tableservice restaurants	
	1986	1991	1986	1991
Cleanliness	53%	59%*	71%	76%*
Food quality	38	42	67	67
Variety offered	37	50*	66	72*
Speed of service	62	63	54	62*
Atmosphere	32	43*	58	67*
Location convenient	71	77*	66	69
Price paid for value received	46	48	64	64
Convenience of not having to prepare	71	79*	78	83*
Attitude of servers	52	54	67	72*
Food consistency from visit to visit	N/A	59	N/A	69
Hours of operation	N/A	78	N/A	75

Note: *The percent represents proportion of respondents answering 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale on which 1=very dissatisfied and 5=very satisfied.*

**significant change*

N/A = Not available

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Consumer Attitudes Toward Fast Food and Moderately Priced Family Restaurants*, 1991

with the speed of service, and 78 percent were satisfied with the hours of operation.

Survey results also indicate that more consumers are satisfied with fast food restaurants' surroundings than they were five years ago. A comparison of the association's Gallup surveys reveals that 59 percent of consumers were satisfied with cleanliness in 1991—significantly more than the 53 percent who were satisfied in 1986.

Upgraded decor and more dining areas are apparently having a positive impact as well. There was a significant increase in the proportion of adults reporting they were satisfied with the atmosphere at fast food places—43 percent in 1991, versus 32 percent in 1986.

Among other changes that have occurred at fast food restaurants in recent years is a major gain in customer satisfaction with the variety of food and beverages offered—50 percent in 1991, up significantly from 37 percent in 1986. This may be the result of efforts made by fast food companies to introduce new products such as salads and special sandwiches to broaden their menu appeal. Moreover, satisfaction with speed of service has not slipped, despite concerns voiced by those who feared that increased variety would slow service to an unsatisfactory level.

In the 1991 survey, significantly more consumers were satisfied with five critical aspects of fast food restaurants, compared with 1986, suggesting that their overall experiences at these establishments have improved. Moreover, the proportion of consumers who were satisfied with the price paid for value received remained unchanged. Perhaps this suggests that the recent switch in emphasis from price-off offers to other types of promotions to maintain menu-price integrity is effective.

A better dining experience

More consumers were satisifed with their experience at moderately priced tableservice restaurants in 1991 than were five years ago. Although 25 percent of adults mentioned the time and convenience factors as reasons for selecting a moderately priced tableservice restaurant instead of another establishment, no single reason stood out the way it does for fast food. Instead, there were a variety of reasons: a night out, a family outing, an opportunity to be with friends and a special occasion were mentioned by a similar number of adults.

Nevertheless, in 1991, 83 percent of adult consumers reported they were satisfied with the convenience of not having to prepare the meal themselves—a significant increase from 78 percent in 1986. Whatever the reason, moderately priced tableservice restaurants are an appealing alternative to eating at home for an overwhelming majority of consumers. Other aspects of moderately priced tableservice restaurants for which there was a significant increase in consumer satisfaction between 1986 and 1991 included cleanliness, atmosphere, variety of food and beverages offered, attitude of servers, and speed of service.

There were significant gains in the proportion of adults who were satisfied with atmosphere and cleanliness at moderately priced, family-type tableservice establishments. Again, this shows that improvements made in decor and maintenance are satisfying consumers' desire for pleasant, attractive surroundings. In 1991, three-fourths (76 percent) of consumers said they were satisfied with cleanliness—up significantly from 71 percent in 1986. Satisfaction with atmosphere showed a significant increase, from 58 percent in 1986 to 67 percent in 1991. Also posting a significant increase was satisfaction with speed of service—from 54 percent in 1986 to 62 percent in 1991.

In terms of variety offered, the changes moderately priced restaurants have made (in many cases by adding food bars, salad bars, ethnic foods and healthful items) are appealing to more consumers than before. Furthermore, consumers are more likely to be satisfied with server attitude, suggesting that improved server-training programs are having an impact.

Taken together, these results indicate that more consumers are having a

better overall experience when dining at a moderately priced tableservice restaurant. Nearly two-thirds of adults reported satisfaction with value received for the price.

Fast food restaurants most visited

Both fast food restaurants and moderately priced tableservice restaurants are popular with consumers. However, fast food restaurants are visited more frequently. According to *Consumer Attitudes Toward Fast Food and Moderately Priced Family Restaurants*, more than one-fourth (26 percent) of consumers said they visited fast food restaurants more than once a week, and another one-fourth did so about once a week. Only 4 percent of adults said they never eat at fast food restaurants.

The frequency of visiting fast food restaurants varies across different demographic groups. Young adults (18 to 24 years of age) frequently go to fast food places, as 40 percent of this age group said they dined at fast food places more than once a week. The proportion dropped to 27 percent for those between 35 and 44 years of age. Other demographic groups that had substantial proportions of adults reporting that they ate at fast food restaurants more than one time a week included males (30 percent), singles (30 percent), those with a household income of $40,000 or more (28 percent), and persons living in the South (32 percent).

When it came to dining at moderately priced, family-type tableservice restaurants, just 15 percent of adult consumers said they ate there more than once a week. On the other hand, 28 percent said they patronized these establishments once a week, and another 26 percent did so once every two or three weeks. Only 2 percent said they never patronized moderately priced tableservice restaurants.

Moderately priced tableservice restaurants are more likely than average to be popular with males, Southerners, and those in the middle or upper income brackets. Among Southern consumers, 18 percent said they patronized moderately priced tableservice restaurants more than once in an average seven-day period, and another 28 percent dined at these establishments once a week. Consumers with higher household incomes were also more likely to dine at moderately priced tableservice restaurants.

—Elizabeth Gordon

To order the report

Copies of *Consumer Attitudes Toward Fast Food and Moderately Priced Family Restaurants* (publication CS940) are available to association members for $30 and to nonmembers for $60. This includes shipping and handling charges. (Overseas orders require a 20 percent surcharge.) All orders must be prepaid.

You may order by sending a check or money order to the National Restaurant Association Publications Department, 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington DC 20036-3097. For credit-card orders, call the association's information service and library between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Eastern time) at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960.

1991 minimum-wage survey results

On April 1, 1991, the federal minimum wage increased from $3.80 to $4.25 per hour. To assess how operators have responded to this increase—the second increase in two years—the National Restaurant Association conducted a member survey. According to survey results, many restaurateurs have responded to the most recent minimum-wage increase by increasing menu prices and curtailing employee hours.*

For the second time in two years, the federal minimum wage increased on April 1. After rising on April 1, 1990, from $3.35 to $3.80 per hour, the latest increase effective April 1, 1991, pushed the federal minimum wage to $4.25 per hour—a 12 percent increase. Coupled with the 45-cents-per-hour increase in 1990, the minimum wage has increased nearly 27 percent since 1989.

According to monthly earnings data for nonsupervisory workers from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the 1991 increase in the federal minimum wage had a somewhat different effect on average hourly earnings of nonsupervisory employees in eating and drinking places than did last year's increase. The overall average hourly wage paid to nonsupervisory workers in eating and drinking places advanced 8 cents per hour between March and April 1991, reflecting the rise in the federal minimum wage. In 1990, the overall average advanced by a smaller 5 cents per hour between March and April.

However, in 1990 the increase in the minimum wage pushed the rate of growth (as derived by comparing the previous-year wages of the same month, such as April 1989 to April 1990) in the overall wage at eating and drinking places up from 4 percent to 5 percent. In 1991, the minimum-wage increase pushed the overall wage at eating and drinking places in April 1991 up 4.7 percent compared with April 1990. In May 1991, preliminary data indicate that the advance compared with May 1990 was a somewhat lower 4.2 percent. This lower 4 percent figure compares with the increase posted in 1989 and in early 1990, prior to the 1990 increase in the federal minimum wage.

Operators raise prices, cut hours

According to the recent National Restaurant Association survey, many operators

*A survey developed to assess the effect of the April 1, 1991, increase in the federal minimum wage was sent to key organizational members as a supplement to the May 20, 1991, *Washington Weekly*. Responses were received from 1,064 members, a response rate similar to that of the survey conducted in 1990. The results presented here represent 887 respondents operating in states where the state minimum wage was below $4.25 before April 1, 1991. This excludes respondents from Alaska, California, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Minnesota, Oregon, Rhode Island and Washington.

Types of employees affected by specific cost-cutting steps

Many employees were affected by the federal minimum-wage increases

Type of employee	Reduced hours worked 1990	Reduced hours worked 1991	Reduced number of employees 1990	Reduced number of employees 1991	Added labor-saving equipment 1990	Added labor-saving equipment 1991
Servers	78%	73%	63%	49%	33%	21%
Buspersons	69	59	70	61	23	12
Counter workers	42	40	41	31	33	11
Dishwashers	73	66	51	42	47	33
Cooks	77	72	54	48	87	68
Salad prep workers	48	47	39	35	70	55

Note: *Percentages based on number of respondents taking a specific step.*
Source: National Restaurant Association, Minimum-Wage Survey, 1990 and 1991.

Steps taken by operators as a result of federal minimum-wage increases

Increasing menu prices and reducing employee hours were the most common responses

Action	Yes, have done	Yes, plan to do	No	No answer
Increase menu prices				
1991 survey	59%	21%	16%	4%
1990 survey	56	28	14	2
Reduce number of employee hours worked				
1991 survey	56	13	21	10
1990 survey	44	18	28	10
Reduce number of employees				
1991 survey	36	13	37	14
1990 survey	25	17	41	17
Add labor-saving equipment				
1991 survey	14	23	42	21
1990 survey	12	26	38	24
Cut hours of operation				
1991 survey	12	6	59	22
1990 survey	8	7	59	26
Cut employee benefits				
1991 survey	15	12	48	25
1990 survey	14	14	49	23

Source: National Restaurant Association, Minimum-Wage Survey, 1990 and 1991. 1990 survey based on 746 respondents in states where minimum wage was below $3.80 before April 1, 1990. 1991 survey based on 887 respondents in states where minimum wage was below $4.25 before April 1, 1991.

are raising menu prices and shortening the hours worked by their employees. Fifty-nine percent of survey respondents reported they had increased menu prices, and an additional 21 percent said they planned to do so. These results are similar to those found in an association survey conducted following the minimum-wage increase in 1990. Of the 746 respondents to the 1990 survey, 56 percent had raised their menu prices and an additional 28 percent were planning to do so.

The other step that a majority of survey respondents have taken or are planning to take is to reduce the number of hours worked by employees. Fifty-six percent of 1991 survey respondents have done so, and another 13 percent plan to. This option is seemingly a more appealing one to operators this year than it was last year. Results of the 1990 survey indicated that 44 percent of respondents had cut employees' hours, and 18 percent were planning to do so. It is possible that this measure may have gained popularity because today's cost-conscious consumers might object to paying higher menu prices.

Although increasing menu prices and cutting staff hours were the most common responses to the new minimum wage among survey respondents, some operators are trying other tactics. According to the 1991 survey, 49 percent of respondents have reduced or are planning to reduce the number of employees; 37 percent have added or are planning to add labor-saving equipment; and 27 percent have cut or are planning to cut employee benefits.

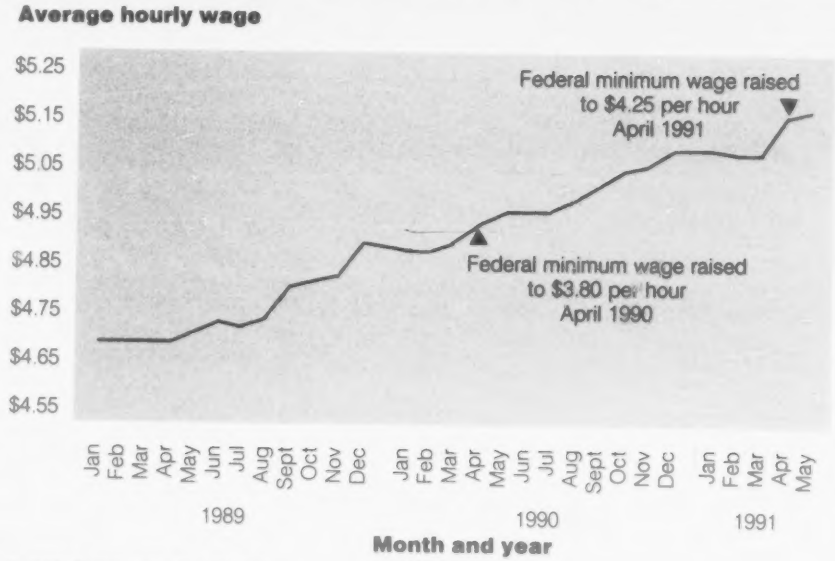
The above figures show a noticeable increase in the proportion of respondents who have reduced or are planning to reduce the size of their staffs—42 percent responded in a similar fashion in 1990. Of particular note is an increase from 25 percent in 1990 to 36 percent in 1991 in the proportion of respondents who have already reduced the number of employees in response to the new minimum wage.

Workers affected differently

Survey results indicate that the employees affected by steps taken as a result of the most recent minimum-wage increase are not necessarily minimum-wage employees. Different types of workers have been affected in different ways.

For example, the association's survey results indicate that when restaurateurs reduced employee hours, 73 percent cut back on hours worked by waiters and waitresses. Other workers that were targeted for cutbacks in hours included cooks (72 percent), dishwashers (66 percent) and buspersons (59 percent).

Average hourly wage paid at eating and drinking places, January 1989–May 1991



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Although the same groups of workers were also targeted after 1990's minimum-wage increase, all of these proportions were down slightly in 1991.

Among restaurateurs who had reduced the size of their staffs, 61 percent mentioned that buspersons were affected, while 49 percent reported waitstaff being affected. Service staff were not the only workers affected, however, as 48 percent of respondents who cut the size of their staffs reported that their cooks were affected. These reported proportions are lower in 1991 survey results than in the 1990 survey.

With a large proportion of survey respondents reporting that cooks were likely to be part of hours cuts or staff cuts, it is not surprising that some restaurateurs are adding labor-saving equipment to the kitchen. Among respondents adding labor-saving equipment, 68 percent said that cooks were affected, and 55 percent said salad-prep workers were affected.

Average hourly earnings in eating and drinking places

The average hourly wage jumped 8 cents between March and April 1991

Month	1990	Percent change*	1991	Percent change*
January	$4.87	4.1%	$5.09	4.5%
February	4.87	3.8	5.08	4.3
March	4.88	4.1	5.08	4.1
April	4.93	5.1	5.16	4.7
May	4.96	5.3	5.17**	4.2
June	4.96	4.9		
July	4.96	5.1		
August	4.98	5.1		
September	5.02	4.6		
October	5.05	5.0		
November	5.06	5.0		
December	5.09	4.3		

*Percent change over same month, previous year
**Preliminary

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Ripple effects

The 1991 increase in the federal minimum wage had more than just direct effects on minimum-wage employees. Fifty-seven percent of survey respondents reported that they had increased wages for non-tipped employees who were receiving $4.25 or more per hour. These increases affected an average of 22 employees per establishment where non-minimum wages were increased. In addition, 55 percent of respondents increased the cash wages of their tipped employees to comply with the new minimum, which affected an average of 35 employees per establishment.

Another noticeable ripple effect of the new minimum wage on foodservice operations was the increase in payroll costs. The vast majority of survey respondents—87 percent—report that payroll costs increased as a result of the new minimum wage, and the average payroll cost increase was 8 percent. This compares with 82 percent of the 1990 survey respondents who reported an increase in their payroll due to the new minimum wage. The average reported increase in 1990 was a slightly lower 7 percent.

Training wage not popular

One of the major provisions brought about by an amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) to aid businesses such as foodservice operations (which traditionally employ a large number of young workers) was the development of a "training wage" set below minimum wage. It was thought that this provision would help businesses save money while training employees, some of whom would leave prior to completion of their training.

Despite its existence, the training wage is not popular among survey respondents. Although 77 percent of respondents reported employing teenagers and 89 percent said they were aware of the training wage, only 8 percent currently use the training wage. (An additional 12 percent plan to do so.) The vast majority—77 percent—will not use the training wage. Among those using the training wage, an average of 10 employees per establishment are paid at that level.

"Interstate commerce" amendments

Most respondents (86 percent) with sales below $500,000 are aware that the 1989 amendments to the FLSA require that all employees engaged in "interstate commerce" be paid the new federal minimum wage, regardless of the small-business exemption. Interstate commerce may include such tasks as handling credit cards or traveler's checks, placing out-of-state phone calls and unloading trucks that have crossed state lines. Among small firms, 22 percent reported it was necessary to raise employees to $4.25 per hour because they were engaged in some form of interstate commerce. Among those firms that had to give their employees a raise due to the interstate-commerce condition, an average of 9 employees per establishment were affected.

Among respondents with annual sales of less than $500,000, 38 percent report that they would be able to hire willing workers for less than the $4.25 per hour the federal law requires.

—Nancy Michalski

Off-premises update

After slowing down in 1988 to a growth rate of just 1.9 percent, off-premises traffic growth is on the rise again. According to CREST data, off-premises customer counts grew by 3 percent in both 1989 and 1990, fueling industry-wide traffic growth. Quickservice restaurants continue to generate the lion's share of off-premises traffic. Delivery and drive-thru traffic growth rates have declined, while carryout traffic growth has picked up.*

Continued demand for convenience from time-pressed consumers has helped keep off-premises restaurant traffic growing. According to CREST, 46 percent of restaurant traffic in 1990 was off-premises (including carryout, drive-thru and delivery), up from 44 percent in 1987. Although the growth rate for off-premises traffic has slowed somewhat, declining from 7.1 percent in 1987 to 3.4 percent in 1990, there has been a slight upturn in recent years. In 1988, off-premises traffic grew by 1.9 percent, but then increased to 3 percent in 1989 and 3.4 percent in 1990.

Despite the lower growth rate than that posted just 3 years ago, off-premises growth continues to exceed on-premises traffic growth and has helped drive traffic increases for the entire restaurant industry.

**CREST stands for* Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, *a diary survey of one of the NPD marketing and research companies.*

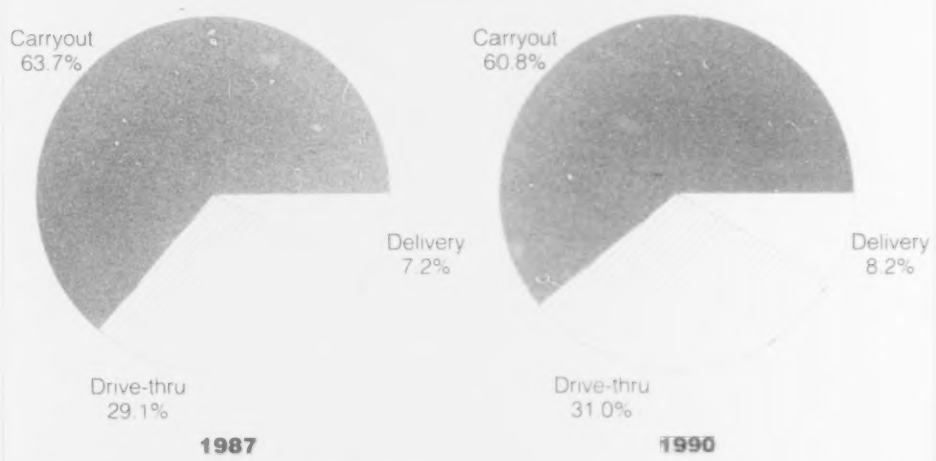
Delivery, drive-thru traffic slow; carryout picks up

Among the three categories of off-premises traffic, carryout remains the leading generator of off-premises customers. Although its share of total off-premises traffic has slipped, carryout accounted for 60.8 percent of total off-premises traffic in 1990, down from 63.7 percent in 1987. In comparison, both drive-thru and delivery have begun to contribute larger shares of off-premises traffic. Drive-thru, which accounted for 29.1 percent of off-premises customer counts in 1987, contributed a larger 31 percent in 1990. Delivery remains the smallest generator of off-premises customers, with an 8.2 percent share of total off-premises traffic in 1990, up from 7.2 percent in 1987.

Interestingly, a look at the growth rates of the three off-premises categories indicates that carryout growth, which slipped in

Breakdown of total off-premises traffic

Both drive-thru and delivery accounted for a larger share of off-premises traffic in 1990 than in 1987



Source: National Restaurant Association, NPD CREST

Breakdown of on and off-premises traffic by meal period and segment, 1987 and 1990

Off-premises dining has become more prevalent at quickservice restaurants and at all three meal periods

	1987		1990	
Segment	**On-premises**	**Off-premises**	**On-premises**	**Off-premises**
Quickservice	40.5%	59.5%	38.2%	61.8%
Midscale	86.3	13.7	86.3	13.7
Upscale	93.8	6.2	94.2	5.8
Meal period				
Breakfast	68.2%	31.8%	65.4%	34.6%
Lunch	62.8	37.2	61.2	38.8
Supper	54.1	45.9	51.2	48.8

Source: National Restaurant Association, NPD CREST

1988, is on the rise, while drive-thru and delivery growth have slowed dramatically. CREST data indicate that in 1988 carryout traffic dipped 2.9 percent, while drive-thru traffic advanced 9.5 percent, and delivery grew 14.6 percent. In 1989, carryout rebounded, growing 2.3 percent. In 1990, carryout posted the largest growth among the three categories of off-premises traffic, advancing 4.3 percent. This compares with a 2.6 percent advance for drive-thru and a marginal 0.3 percent rise in delivery traffic.

It is possible that the addition of drive-thru and delivery services at many restaurants has slowed since the late 1980s and that the growth generated by the addition of new drive-thru and delivery outlets has slowed correspondingly.

Quickservice still tops

Although a 1990 National Restaurant Association Gallup survey indicated that 41 percent of adults were interested in ready-to-eat takeout meals from tableservice restaurants and 30 percent were interested in home delivery of menu items from tableservice restaurants,** CREST data indicate that quickservice restaurants still accounted for the largest share of off-premises restaurant traffic.

According to CREST, quickservice restaurants accounted for 91.9 percent of total off-premises traffic, 88.4 percent of carryout traffic, 98.2 percent of drive-thru traffic and 94.6 percent of delivery traffic in 1990. In addition, quickservice restaurants were the only group to post off-premises traffic growth between 1987 and 1990. Off-premises traffic counts advanced 9.5 percent for quickservice restaurants, but declined 2.4 percent at midscale and 0.8 percent at upscale restaurants between 1987 and 1990.

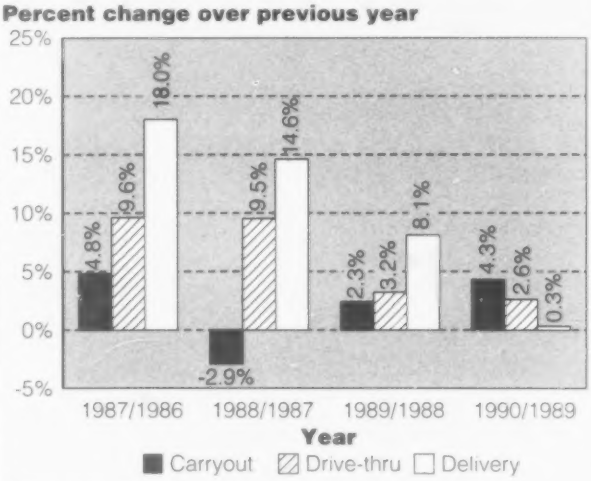
Moreover, only quickservice restaurants saw an increase in the share of traffic from off-premises visits during the period from 1987 to 1990. Off-premises traffic, which accounted for 59.5 percent of quickservice traffic in 1987, contributed a larger 61.8 percent of traffic in 1990. The share of total traffic contributed by off-premises traffic remained unchanged at midscale restaurants (13.7 percent in both 1987 and 1990) and declined at upscale establishments (down from 6.2 percent in 1987 to 5.8 percent in 1990). It is possible that consumers, although pressed for time, may still prefer eating at a tableservice restaurant to taking food out from these establishments, and thus they turn to quickservice restaurants to fulfill their off-premises dining needs.

Although carryout accounted for the largest share of off-premises traffic at all three segments (58.4 percent at quickservice,

**Data from National Restaurant Association's* Tableservice Restaurant Trends: 1991. *A survey of tableservice restaurant operators indicated that the majority offered takeout meals, and more than one out of 10 offered home delivery of menu items. For more information or to order the publication, call the association's Information Service and Library at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960.*

Percent change* in off-premises traffic,** 1987 to 1990

Growth of drive-thru and delivery traffic has slowed in recent years



* over previous year
** for total industry

Source: NPD CREST

88.5 percent at midscale and 85.6 percent at upscale eateries in 1990), delivery has grown, particularly at upscale establishments. At upscale establishments, delivery accounted for 10.5 percent of off-premises traffic in 1990, up from 7.7 percent in 1987. Delivery's share of off-premises traffic grew more modestly at midscale (up from 3.6 percent in 1987 to 4,6 percent in 1990) and quickservice (up from 7.5 percent in 1987 to 8.4 percent in 1990) restaurants.

All meals show off-premises growth

Between 1987 and 1990, off-premises traffic advanced by sizable margins for all three major meal periods, according to CREST. Breakfast recorded the largest advance, with off-premises traffic counts growing 9.4 percent. Off-premises traffic advanced 7.9 percent at lunch and 7.4 percent at supper. This growth has boosted the share of off-premises traffic at all three meal periods as well. In 1990, 34.6 percent of breakfast traffic, 38.8 percent of lunch traffic and 48.8 percent of supper traffic was off-premises. This compares with 31.8 percent for breakfast, 37.2 percent for lunch and 45.9 percent for supper in 1987.

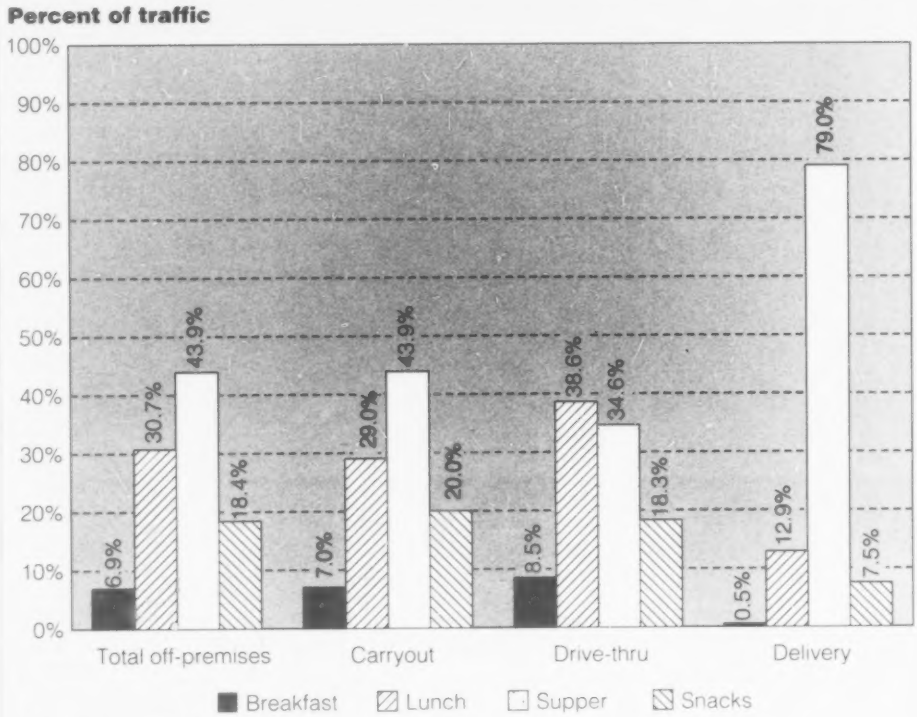
For the most part, supper contributed the largest share of the meal periods to off-premises traffic. This was particularly true of delivery, for which supper accounted for 79 percent of off-premises traffic.

Carryout was the largest contributor to off-premises traffic for each of the three meal periods, contributing 61.3 percent of off-premises breakfast traffic, 57.5 percent of off-premises lunch traffic and 60.8 percent of off-premises supper traffic. What is notable, however, is the increasing share of drive-thru traffic at breakfast and lunch, and the increasing share of delivery traffic at supper. Drive-thru traffic accounted for 38.1 percent of breakfast traffic and 39.0 percent of lunch traffic in 1990, up from 34.3 percent and 35.8 percent, respectively, in 1987. At supper, the major off-premises growth area was delivery, which advanced from 13.1 percent of off-premises traffic in 1987 to 14.7 percent in 1990.

—Nancy Michalski

Distribution of off-premises traffic by meal period, 1990

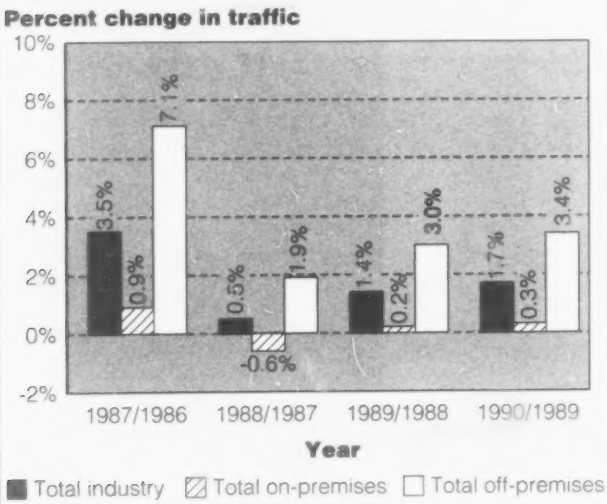
Supper accounted for the largest share of carryout, delivery and total off-premises traffic



Source: National Restaurant Association, NPD CREST

Percent change in customer traffic 1987 to 1990

Off-premises traffic has driven industry traffic growth



Source: NPD CREST

Foodservice Market Measure

June 1991

After three consecutive months in which 50 percent or more of adults were foodservice patrons on a typical day, patronage dipped to 47 percent in June 1991. Moreover, patronage this June was significantly below last year's 55 percent level.

Despite an increase in consumer confidence, fewer consumers were foodservice patrons on a typical day in June than in any month since February. The proportion of adults who were on-premises patrons slipped to 30 percent, a level well below those of earlier this year, as lunch patronage continued to show significant weakness. In contrast, off-premises patronage maintained an improvement that first began in March 1991.

In the first six months of 1991, slightly fewer than half of all adults—49 percent—ate out on a typical day, versus 51 percent last year. Virtually all of the decrease was due to a decline in likelihood of patronage by male consumers. Last year, men showed a substantially higher likelihood of patronage than did women. However, that difference has narrowed as the proportion of men who were patrons on a typical day declined from 57 percent in the first six months of 1990 to 52 percent this year. In contrast, 47 percent of women were patrons on a typical day both in 1990 and in 1991.

Other changes included a decline of 6 percentage points in the proportion of 18 to 24-year-olds who were patrons and a decline of 5 percentage points in patronage among consumers with household incomes of $20,000 to $39,999.

—*Susan Mills*

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day

	January–June 1990	January–June 1991	June 1991
On premises	37%	33%	30%
Off premises	21	21	22
Meal period			
Breakfast	7	6	5
Lunch	30	25	21
Dinner	24	24	27

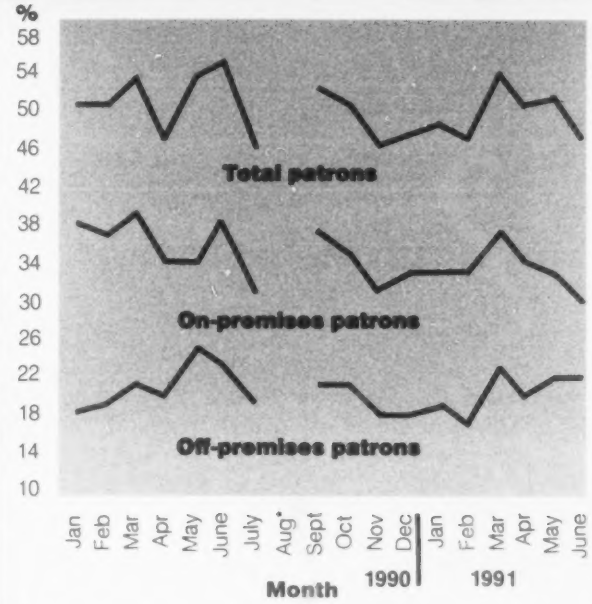
Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day

	January–June 1990	January–June 1991	Percentage point change
Male	57%	52%	-5%
Female	47	47	—
White	51	48	-3
Nonwhite	58	54	-4
Age			
18 to 24 years old	68	62	-6
25 to 34 years old	58	54	-4
35 to 44 years old	55	51	-4
45 to 54 years old	46	49	+3
55 to 64 years old	44	42	-2
65 years old and older	34	34	—
Annual household income			
$40,000 or more	59	56	-3
$20,000 to $39,999	53	47	-5
Less than $20,000	44	44	—
Region			
East	49	48	-1
Midwest	52	49	-3
South	53	50	-3
West	53	50	-3

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons



*No Market Measure was fielded in August 1990.

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Foodservice Market Measure

The Foodservice Market Measure is based on 1,000 telephone interviews, conducted by the Gallup Organization each month, with a nationally representative sample of adults age 18 and older. Each person is asked the same questions:

1. Which of the following did you do yesterday?

☐ Ate on the premises of a restaurant, fast food place, cafeteria or any other place where you purchased a meal or snack.

☐ Purchased takeout food "to go" or had it delivered.

2. Was the food you ate on premises yesterday for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

3. Was the takeout food you purchased or had delivered for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

The monthly tracking of purchases is supplemented by quarterly inquiries on topics of industry interest.

1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: West Springfield, MA
Association member: Mitchell P. Krach Jr.
Operation: Hofbrauhaus
Profile: Upscale German restaurant
In business: 11 years
Seats: 285
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

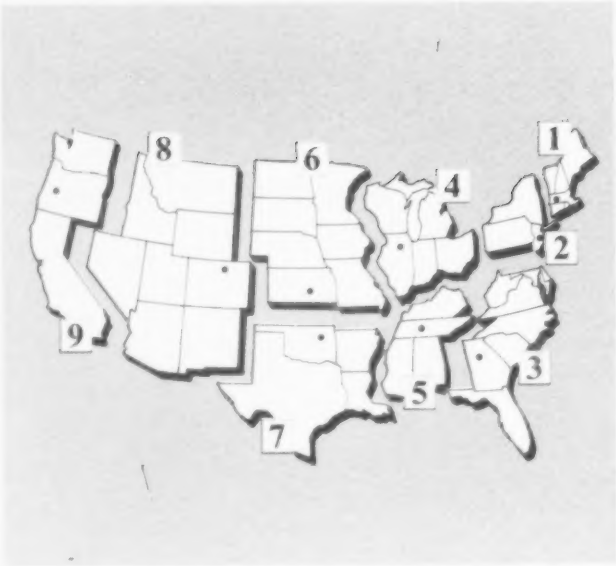
Owners of the Hofbrauhaus, an upscale German restaurant located in a suburb of Springfield, Massachusetts, report steady growth in business this summer. So far this year, Hofbrauhaus seems to be rising above the sluggish area economy and keeping pace with its annual 15 to 20 percent growth rate.

"People are still looking for the exotic foods that they can't get at home," explains **Mitchell P. Krach Jr.,** who co-owns the restaurant with his brothers Gregory, Jonathan and Matthew.

Hofbrauhaus is known for its fresh New England seafood and traditional German meals such as jaegerschnitzel (veal steak sauteed with wild mushroom sauce). The restaurant features authentic German and European decor which, according to Krach, "is described by our European tourists as more authentic than Germany itself."

2 MID-ATLANTIC

Location: Sea Girt, NJ
Association member: Tony Cancro
Operation: Yankee Clipper
Profile: Upscale restaurant; pub and family restaurant
In business: 9 years



Seats: 320
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

A panoramic view of the New Jersey shoreline and high-quality food continue to be the top selling points at the successful Yankee Clipper. According to general manager **Craig Mahar,** business is strong in both the elegant upstairs room, the Surf Room, and the downstairs pub and eatery, the Sand Bar Pub.

During the summer, the Yankee Clipper is flooded with weekenders from nearby beach homes and bed-and-breakfast inns. Residents of affluent Sea Girt and surrounding communities keep the seaside restaurant filled during the off-season. They come for the seafood (swordfish, lobster and tuna steak), and especially for the impressive view of the Atlantic Ocean pounding against the Jersey shore.

"It may sound funny, but our food complements the view rather than the view complementing the food," says Mahar. In past years, the 110-year-old restaurant building has served as a retreat home for nuns, a Coast Guard training facility and a hotel.

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Stone Mountain, GA
Association member: Lawrence Buchthal
Operation: Mama Mia's Pasta & Pizza
Profile: Midscale Italian restaurant
In business: 9 years
Seats: 50
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Mama Mia's Pasta & Pizza is expanding—not by square feet, but into area grocery stores. Mama Mia's frozen pizza and a concoction called "One Pot Pasta" are expected to be on local grocers' shelves in September.

The frozen entrees are a spin-off of the successful restaurant located near Stone Mountain National Park, which draws nearly two million visitors each year. Manager **Craig Stern** says tourists make up almost half of the restaurant's business. That success should continue in coming years, as the 1996 Olympic skeet-shooting, tennis and equestrian events will be held in Stone Mountain.

Music and murals surround the guests at Mama Mia's in an authentic Italian atmosphere. The restaurant features daily specials and a special lasagna made with bacon, chicken, spinach, onion and Alfredo sauce.

4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Ottawa, IL
Association member: Ray Aderes
Operation: Kickapoo Klub
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 2 years
Seats: 130
Meals served: Lunch, dinner, Sunday brunch

With the economy slumping during the past year and Ottawa still recovering from the recession of the early 1980s, Kickapoo Klub management feels lucky to be prospering. Business is on the rise, and the restaurant experienced a successful first winter.

The Kickapoo Klub is located nearly two hours southwest of Chicago in a marina off the busy Illinois River. Much of the business comes from boaters, regular local customers and especially visitors to Starved Rock State Park, located just across the river. Muted pastel colors and a cactus on each table add to the Southwestern flavor of the restaurant.

"It seems that the better Starved Rock does, the more business we do," says manager **Bernadette Filippini.** Guests enjoy sit-

ting on the Kickapoo Klub's 50-seat deck and looking out onto the river and park.

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Franklin, TN
Association members: Marilyn and Calvin LeHew
Operation: Choices and Bennett's Corner
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 7 years
Seats: 325
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Historic Civil War-era surroundings and a refurbished downtown district bring in a nice mix of tourists and Nashville-area regulars to Choices and its upstairs counterpart, Bennett's Corner. Business, says general manager **Rod Pewitt,** "could be better, but it could be a heck of a lot worse."

The restaurant, located 15 minutes south of Nashville, is housed in what was once the old town hardware store. The LeHews renovated the nearly 100-year-old building, which is now listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The menu, which is the same at both restaurants, changes according to the season. In fact, one of the restaurant's mottos is "A Taste of the Seasons."

Staffing the restaurants is a constant problem. "I have a file folder two inches thick with applications," says Pewitt, "but quality help is always hard to find."

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Wichita, KS
Association member: Samuel Peabody Jr.
Operation: Crazy Horse Supper Club
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 23 years
Seats: 110
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

An expansion project in 1989 doubled the Crazy Horse Supper Club in size, making room for its overflow of customers. "We always had so many people here we had to start turning them away," explains manager **Carol Ysidro.**

Located in the industrial southwest section of Wichita, the supper club draws a large crowd of workers for lunch and families for dinner. Crazy Horse, named after a restaurant in France, is known for its frog legs and a steak special that offers a second steak at a discount price. Tuesday night brings the successful Mexican night—the only night of the week on which you can order Mexican food.

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Tulsa, OK
Association member: Frank Edwards
Operation: Frank's Country Inn
Profile: Family restaurant
In business: 18 years
Seats: 250
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Frank's Country Inn is proof that a high-quality restaurant that offers good value can survive in any market. The Tulsa restaurant is one of 13 all-you-can-eat buffet restaurants within a two-mile area. War and the recession kept business slow earlier this year, but business is picking up again. Later in the year, Frank's will begin adding another dining room.

"We compete by offering more meat and by selling our excellent service," explains owner **Frank Edwards.** His restaurant offers "Oklahoma-style food," which according to Edwards means chicken, beef ribs, fried catfish, brisket and barbecue in a country-and-western setting. Service at the restaurant is enhanced by the fact that all of Frank's employees are full-time workers.

Customers come from all over the Tulsa area and include many travelers since Frank's is located just off old Route 66.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Fort Collins, CO
Association member: Paul Chatfield
Operation: Cuisine! Cuisine!
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 8 years
Seats: 75
Meals served: Dinner, Friday lunch, Sunday brunch

Because several major companies are planning to locate in the Fort Collins area, Cuisine! Cuisine! is expecting even brighter days ahead. The restaurant is already reaping the benefits of customers from a large computer company and nearby Colorado State University.

"It's a coupon town," says manager **Brenda Wray.** "To get people out, you really need to offer something special."

Cuisine! Cuisine! is well known for its theme weeks, during which the restaurant specializes in one particular cuisine, ranging from Mediterranean to Asian. The people of Fort Collins, a town of nearly 100,000, sometimes come just for dessert—especially the homemade cheesecake.

Cuisine! Cuisine! has an alter-ego, too. It doubles as an art gallery. Local artists display their works on the restaurant's walls, and a champagne reception is held every few months to showcase a new opening.

9 PACIFIC

Location: Eugene, OR
Association member: Mary Slagle
Operation: Track Town Pizza
Profile: Pizza restaurant and delivery
In business: 12 years
Seats: 90
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Full layers of pizza toppings and a reputation for using only top-quality ingredients has created a following for Track Town Pizza. Most of the restaurant's business is made up of deliveries to nearby University of Oregon. College students never seem to tire of Track Town pizza, according to manager **Tom Slagle.** Meanwhile, tough times for the local wood-products industry has put a damper on sales to other types of customers.

Track Town advertises by sponsoring many University of Oregon athletic events and social activities. Track Town can't promise 30-minute delivery, and the pizza costs a bit more than that of competitors. But according to Slagle, "The quality product really sells itself." Wednesday-night specials result in Track Town pumping out 800 to 1,000 pizzas.

Eugene is well known in the track-and-field world as a great running town, and that's where the name Track Town Pizza comes from.

—Pat DiDomenico

Attention busboys: Check under the table

It's not unusual for a patron to leave the restaurant and forget something under the table. It is unusual when that something is a bag containing $277,700.

That's what a busboy in a San Francisco restaurant found under a chair vacated by an 82-year-old man. The man returned to claim the bag, but the restaurant owners (fearing foul play) placed a call to the police, who determined that the money was not stolen.

The cash-laden customer claimed that he didn't trust banks.

—Washington Times

Restaurant elementary

Manhattan restaurants pride themselves on their uniqueness, and one recent addition to the Upper East Side culinary scene was definitely one of a kind. Few members of the young staff stood taller than 3½ feet, the menu leaned heavily toward finger foods, and the crowd was highly select—mainly the parents of the 24 first-graders who ran Kids Cafe II at Public School 198.

The experiment in hospitality and education grew out of a school curriculum that includes a study of the community. Kids were fascinated by restaurants in the real world and asked to open one of their own. The students handled operations at the cafe, from cooking to publicity to charting sales and waiting tables.

Unfortunately, Kids Cafe II closed with the end of the school year. But the lessons these young restaurateurs learned will be carried with them as they grow—perhaps into adult chefs and restaurateurs.

—New York Times

Takeout treasures

Any restaurateur knows that attractive menu merchandising is a key to winning customers. But for customer and artist Harvey Spiller, the menus are the merchandise—and they are treasures.

Spiller, who claims to eat Chinese takeout food every day, has turned life into art, showcasing his collection of 5,000 Chinese takeout menus in an exhibit at New York's Franklin Furnace Gallery. The exhibit also includes such icons of Chinese-American cuisine as plastic delivery bags, a hot-and-sour soup box, a stuffed dummy dressed as a Chinese delivery man and a five-foot-long cloth fortune cookie where visitors can hide their favorite fortunes.

Spiller's collection is growing. One local artist contributes takeout boxes made from antique Chinese paper, and an expanding network of fellow fanatics sends Spiller Chinese takeout menus and memorabilia from as far away as Sweden and Israel.

—Wall Street Journal

A burdock burger to go

The world may have a taste for American fast food, but in Japan operators are trying to make their American-style offerings more Japanese.

Research has indicated that Japanese-style items are appealing to customers in Japan because they are perceived as more healthful, as well as more familiar.

McDonald's Japanese subsidiary is set to unveil Chicken Tatsuta, a soy-soaked fried filet sandwich, and Wendy's International now offers both a teriyaki burger and a deep-fried pork cutlet sandwich accompanied by a bowl of rice. Japanese chains offer everything from sauteed burdock (a Japanese vegetable) to salmon burgers served with layers of cheese and dried seaweed. Both are served between rice buns.

—Wall Street Journal

Nutritious meals for macho males?

Despite their hearty meat-and-potatoes reputations, the majority of American males rate themselves as "fairly concerned" about nutrition, according to a recent survey by R.H. Bruskin Associates.

The survey revealed that 80 percent of males 50 to 64 years of age ranked nutrition as a top priority in their dietary habits, and 58 percent of those under age 50 agreed. About 44 percent of respondents cited health as the most important reason for eating right, while 20 percent ranked fitness as the major motivation for eating nutritiously.

This "concern," however, may be deceiving. Only 53 percent of respondents said they had changed their diets because of their nutrition concerns.

—Washington Post

TAKE YOUR CASE TO CONGRESS

You CAN make a difference.

Come to the foodservice industry's premier grassroots event—the National Restaurant Association's seventh annual Public Affairs Conference, September 23-25, 1991, in Washington, DC.

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Register today! Conference limited to first 450 participants. Call the Government Affairs department for more information at (202) 331-5900 or (800) 424-5156.

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION VOL. 11 □ NO. 8 □ SEPTEMBER 1991

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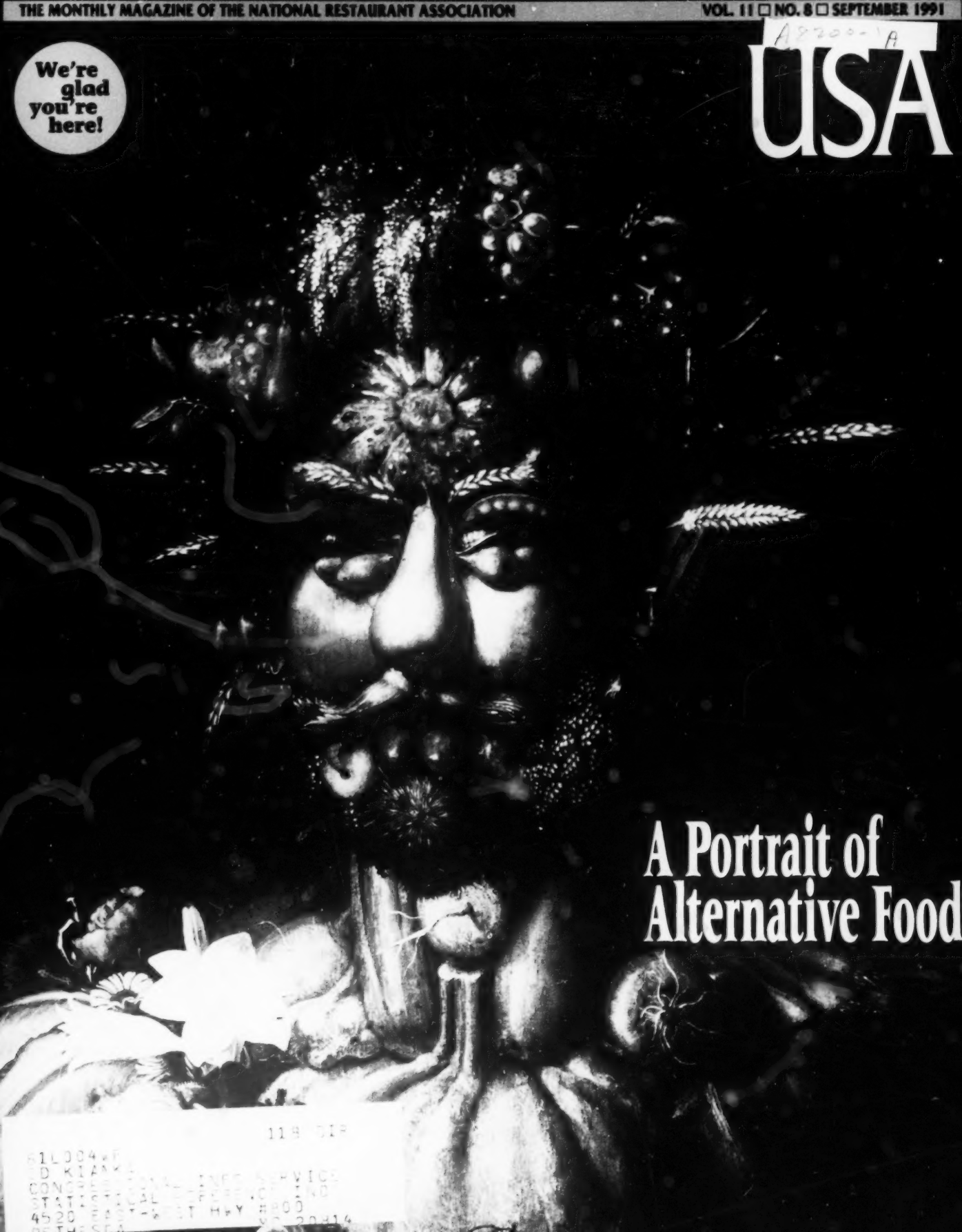

A Portrait of Alternative Food

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10/23–25 St. Louis, MO

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11/6–8 San Diego, CA

For more information on specific study groups, contact Rosemary Curtis at (312) 853-2525.

The Executive Study Groups present semi-annual professional development programs for executives who would like to meet with their industry peers to share ideas and concerns. Executives in each of the aforementioned disciplines from member foodservice companies are welcome and encouraged to participate.

FMP TEST DATES

10/8 Chicago, IL
10/28 Chicago, IL
12/3 Baltimore, MD
12/9 Chicago, IL

SEMINARS

SERVSAFE Responsible Alcohol Service
9/25 (full-day program)
11/19 (full-day program)

SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation Train the Trainer
9/30–10/2 (three-day program)

Service That Sells
10/21 (half-day program)
10/22 (half-day program)

Tips & Tools for Training
10/29 (half-day program)

Current Legal Issues
11/18 (full-day program)

Note: Unless otherwise indicated, all seminars are held in the Educational Foundation's conference center at 250 South Wacker Drive in Chicago.

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RESTAURANTS USA

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Executive Editor Jeffrey R. Prince
Editor Paul Moomaw
Managing Editor Melanie A. Crosby
Staff Contributors
Jennifer Batty, Pat DiDomenico, Elizabeth Gordon, Andrew McLauchlin, Nancy Michalski, Susan Mills, B. Hudson Riehle, Denise Roach, Wendy Webster, Diane Welland

Art Direction
Magazine: Tom Bellucci
Covers: Richard Earle, Liz Dalgetty

Administrative Assistant Susan Kessler
Editorial Secretary Ronda Bowers

Editorial office and association headquarters 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington DC 20036-3097, (202) 331-5900
Chicago office 150 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60601, (312) 853-2525
Educational Foundation 250 S. Wacker Dr. Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60606, (312) 715-1010

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

John R. Farquharson, president
ARASERVE, Philadelphia, PA

Public Affairs Conference 1991

Congress has returned from its monthlong summer recess and has begun to look at a host of foodservice-related issues. Mandated health benefits, teen labor and the attempt to repeal the FICA tax on tips will be hot topics of debate this fall.

These and other issues will be discussed at the 7th annual Public Affairs Conference, "Take Your Case to Congress." The event, which will run September 23-25 at the Capital Hilton Hotel in Washington DC, offers individual restaurateurs the opportunity to help boost the growing influence of the foodservice industry.

A highlight of the Public Affairs Conference is the elegant *Chef d'oeuvre* congressional reception. Open only to members of Congress and conference participants, the reception offers you a relaxed opportunity to meet the men and women who create our laws.

The conference also features face-to-face meetings with lawmakers in their offices and a chance to learn how to protect your bottom line by making your voice heard. To reserve a place at the Public Affairs Conference, contact Gay Westbrook at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5915.

Number of FICA sponsors grows

The proposed repeal of the 1987 FICA tax-on-tips law will surely be a high priority at the Public Affairs Conference. Since its introduction in March, the repeal legislation has attracted more cosponsors than did our entire FICA repeal effort in the last Congress. So far, 181 members of the House and 28 Senators have agreed to cosponsor the bill.

The National Restaurant Association is aiming to attract a majority of Congress—218 representatives and 51 senators—to cosponsor repeal legislation. Your calls and letters are the most powerful ammunition that we have in knocking down this law. Keep up the good work.

Another health-care bill introduced

A third "play or pay" health-care bill has been introduced, this one by House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dan Rostenkowski (D-IL). The bill would require employers to either provide health insurance for workers or pay a heavy payroll tax to fund a public health-care plan. The association opposes the creation of any mandated benefits and will lobby hard to defeat such proposals.

Media spotlight on association studies

A series of press releases sent out by the association's Communications department this summer has caused a stir among the national media, focusing favorable attention on the association and the foodservice industry. These press releases generated stories on the Associated Press wire, national radio networks and television outlets across the country.

One release reported a surprising 17 percent increase in bar sales at tableservice restaurants since 1987. Meanwhile, a 7 percent decline in alcohol-related traffic deaths during the same period suggests that alcohol-

awareness programs and designated-driver programs seem to be paying off.

Another press release reported on an association-sponsored Gallup poll that demonstrated a demand for vegetarian items in restaurants. The poll showed that 20 percent of American adults are likely to look for a restaurant that serves vegetarian items when they decide to eat out. (See story on page 20.)

A third release announced the association's list of guidelines for restaurants that employ teenagers. Developed in conjunction with the National Education Association, the guidelines are suggestions for restaurant operators and school officials on how to balance a teenager's academic life and job experience.

New industry operations report available

The association's *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1991* is now available (see story page 42). The report, based on data collected from 1,270 restaurant operators, offers a wealth of useful financial and operating information.

The study gives operators a chance to compare their operation with others on important statistics such as food sales, beverage sales, cost of sales, turnover rates, average check size, analysis of employment, gross profit, controllable expenses, occupancy costs, restaurant profit and pretax income. Different categories of restaurants—from full-menu tableservice to cafeterias—are examined in the report.

SERVSAFE training goes bilingual

The popular SERVSAFE "Serving Safe Food" video training series is now available in a Spanish translation. The four-part program helps managers train employees in safe food-handling procedures. The program covers: employee health and hygiene; receiving, storing, preparing and serving food safely; and cleaning and sanitizing. The videos demonstrate important food safety practices and present information in a format that helps employees retain what they have learned.

Each SERVSAFE video includes a leader's guide to help managers direct a productive training session. For more information on special package prices, contact the Educational Foundation at (800) 765-2122.

Last month 51 new members joined the National Restaurant Association. We welcome you to the association. Your participation in our programs and your interest in our activities will help strengthen both the association and your restaurant.

Sincerely,

John Farquharson

John R. Farquharson
President and Chairman of the Board

RESTAURANTS USA

A PORTRAIT OF ALTERNATIVE FOODS

New attitudes and new food sources are giving chefs and restaurateurs new options for pleasing customers.

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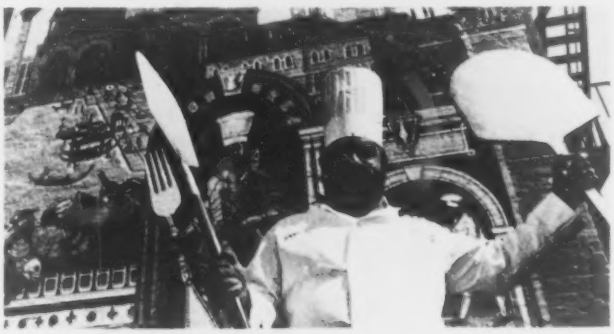

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Cover: "Vertumnus" by Giuseppe Arcimboldo, Skokloster Castle, Sweden. Photo by Goran Schmidt.

Team USA travels to China

Members of the 1992 Culinary Team USA recently took an educational tour of China, studying food preparation techniques used by chefs with a 5,000-year history of cooking. The team members were guests of the heads of state of China at the First International Symposium on Chinese Dietetic Culture.

During this educational tour, the American chefs were treated to 10 and 12-course meals at the Great Hall and State Guest House in Beijing, and were given demonstrations on preparing dim sum, beggar's chicken, drunken shrimp and Peking duck.

The tour included stops in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing. Team members sampled traditional meals from the various regions of China, such as Canton, Sichuan, Hunan and Shanghai.

The Asian method of food preparation will grow more popular in the future, according to team manager Keith Keogh. "Current trends in global cuisine are leaning toward the influence of culinary art native to Chinese and Asian cuisine," says Keogh. "We plan to take these new insights and blend them with the traditional tastes of American dishes, furthering our more practical and nutritious approach to American cuisine."

The team's trip was filmed for use in educational videos and a possible broadcast documentary. The team has tentative plans to travel to Europe next year to learn more about the classical cooking techniques of the traditional Europeans.

Keogh is also busy preparing to assume the responsibilities of his new position as president of the American Culinary Foundation, which, together with the National Restaurant Association, is a cofounder of the U.S. Culinary Team Foundation.

Culinary Team USA members learn the ancient art of food delivery in Hong Kong.

Team USA manager Keith Keogh peruses plantains at a Shanghai market.

Servers to race a California Mile

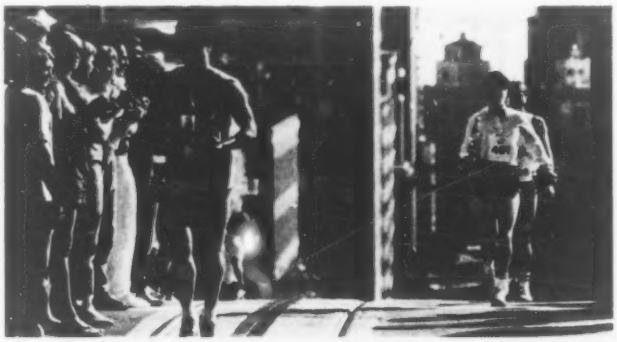
The rules of the race read like a wine steward's bad dream: Run up a steep hill while balancing a glass and bottle of red wine on a serving tray as hundreds of people look on. But in reality, the California Mile Waiters Race is part of a lighthearted day of competition to raise money for San Francisco's public high school sports programs.

On October 6, San Francisco-area restaurants and bars will sponsor participants who run a half-mile course straight up California Street. The course travels up a 300-foot grade along cable car tracks and finishes at the top of Nob Hill. Servers must cross the finish line with a tray, bottle of wine and half-filled glass intact.

The Waiters Race is part of a three-hour televised California Mile running and cycling event with 18 separate contests. Events are open to employees of restaurants, bars, hotels, clubs and foodservice-related businesses.

"It's a positive way to involve the restaurant community in a very worthwhile effort," says Janet Trefethen of race sponsor Trefethen Vineyards of Napa, California. Budget shortfalls have caused San Francisco to consider cutting some sports from public high schools.

Registration and information can be obtained by calling race director Mike Marcus at (415) 383-0314.



Servers in last year's Waiters Race reach the crest of Nob Hill and head for the finish line. On October 6, San Francisco restaurants will again sponsor servers to raise money for local high school sports.

A high-flying promotion

More than 120 pilots and flying enthusiasts landed at Brooks Field in Marshall, Michigan, and celebrated Schuler's Restaurant's Third Annual Fly-In, on Sunday, July 14.

Schuler's attracts a steady stream of pilots, and the summer celebration was created as a way for the restaurant to thank its fly-in customers. Pilots and passengers from all over the Midwest were met at the airstrip and transported in a courtesy van to Schuler's for brunch.

Each Fly-In participant received a Schuler's embroidered flying patch and was eligible for prizes such as dinner for two at Schuler's and overnight accommodations at the National House Inn in Marshall.

The event drew many local residents to the airstrip to watch the planes land. The surprise of the day was the arrival of two World War II Navy T-28 jet aircraft that flew in from the Detroit area.

"Our third Fly-In was our most successful ever," said Marge Hakes, general manager of Schuler's in Marshall.

Schuler's Restaurant assistant manager David Graveline (right) welcomes pilots to the restaurant's Fly-In celebration.

Disability plan available to members

National Restaurant Association members now have the opportunity to take advantage of a group disability income plan.

Members under the age of 60 who have been actively working full-time (30 hours per week or more) for the past 90 days and who have not been hospitalized in the past six months are eligible for this coverage.

If disabled, participating members would receive a monthly benefit for up to five full years when disabled by a covered accident and up to one full year when disabled by a covered illness.

This coverage pays in addition to any other insurance, including Social Security and worker's compensation, as long as total benefits do not exceed 70 percent of the covered person's monthly salary, exclusive of bonuses and overtime pay. The policy may be returned within 30 days for a refund if a member is not satisfied.

Complete information regarding the association's Group Disability Income Plan will be mailed to members soon. For more information, contact the insurance administrator, Albert H. Wohlers and Co., Group Insurance Plans, 1440 N. Northwest Highway, Park Ridge, Illinois 60068. Or call (800) 323-2106 or (708) 803-3100.

Don't dump it, donate it

What can you do with those paper plates and cups you never got to use, the table linens that arrived in the wrong color or the extra tiles from the new patio floor? You don't want to toss them in the garbage, so you could donate them to the National Association for the Exchange of Industrial Resources (NAEIR)—and receive a federal tax deduction.

Potential donors give NAEIR a list of the items they wish to give away. Generally, NAEIR prefers new merchandise or slightly used items. The potential donor is then notified within 48 hours as to whether the donation is acceptable.

Donors must pay for shipping the items to the NAEIR's warehouse in Galesburg, Illinois, but this expense is also tax deductible. Then NAEIR sends tax documentation within 14 days that will make the company eligible for the deduction.

Among the items sought are computers, paper products, cleaning supplies, tableware, clothing, books, arts and crafts supplies, dishes, bathroom fixtures and furniture. These materials are redistributed to 7,000 organizations such as schools, camps, hospitals, churches, nursing homes and social service programs.

For more information on making a donation to NAEIR, contact them at 560 McClure Street, Galesburg, Illinois 61401 or call (309) 343-0704.

FEEDBACK

Training update

The producer of the training video mentioned in the article "The Power of Employee Training" in the August 1991 issue of ***Restaurants USA*** was not identified correctly.

The video, entitled "The Service Paradox," was produced by Pittsburgh Production Group and may be purchased through the National Restaurant Association at (800) 424-5156.

Address your comments about ***Restaurants USA*** and current foodservice issues to: ***Restaurants USA*** Feedback, National Restaurant Association, 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. Submissions may be edited for length.

Teen labor: Restaurant associations powwow to share ideas

State restaurant association executives, National Restaurant Association staff and officials from the Department of Labor, the U.S. Congress and the Tennessee Department of Labor met recently in Nashville, Tennessee, to discuss the positive programs that foodservice organizations are developing to improve the industry's reputation as a youth employer.

Ed Lump, co-chair of the ISRAE/National Restaurant Association Child Labor Task Force and executive vice president of the Wisconsin Restaurant Association (WRA) said that the conference was important because of the larger social issues surrounding the development of the nation's youth. "As employers of young people, we need to go beyond what is merely required by law, toward providing a quality work experience that enhances the educational experience," Lump said. To do so, Lump said that state associations should share what they are doing to achieve these goals.

The threatening legislative climate has led to some innovative teen-labor programs by state associations.

Task force co-chair Mark Gorman, the senior director of government affairs for the National Restaurant Association, agreed that the potentially threatening legislative climate on the state and federal levels has led to the creation of some innovative proactive programs on the part of state restaurant associations.

Cooperation with state agencies

On the first day of the conference, state association speakers discussed the benefits of working closely with state agencies when attempting to revise teen-labor laws.

John Livengood, executive vice president of the Indiana Restaurant Association (IRA), said that his association mobilized when it was forced to mount a defensive campaign against a 1989 child-labor bill that was introduced by two legislators who were also teachers. A coalition of chain-restaurant government affairs representatives joined with the association to oppose the 1989 bill. The groups worked together to draft 1990 legislation that benefited both employers and employees. With the help of a state Department of Labor official's technical expertise, a successful bill was developed.

"We have a long-standing relationship with our Department of Labor, and their help with this was consistent with our good relations," Livengood said.

Education first

In response to the less favorable parts of the bill, including the newly granted right of schools to revoke work permits and the new permit requirement for 17-year-olds, the IRA developed one of the industry's most creative approaches to youth employment: the "Education First" program.

The voluntary "Education First" program asks that participating restaurateurs gather parental permission slips before hiring young workers and send notices of employment to the workers' schools. Employers pledge to schedule work hours flexibly to better accommodate students' school workload.

Wisconsin Restaurant Association executive Lump told the group about the alliance between his state's restaurant association and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Together, they formed a task force on youth employment that included traditional industry foes such as the Congress of Parents and Teachers and the Wisconsin State AFL-CIO.

"As employers of young people, we need to go beyond what is merely required by law."

—Ed Lump, co-chairman, child labor task force

The WRA has pursued the employer-awareness aspect of the child-labor issue through a modified version of Indiana's "Education First" program. Sally Scott, who handles the program for the WRA, said the association has put together a long list of contacts for information and publicity that could help participating members. The association also developed other materials, such as invitations to parents for job-site visits, that make the program as "user-friendly as possible," said Scott.

Pete Meersman, executive director of the Colorado Restaurant Association, told the group about his state's plan to implement an "Education First" program through its Education Foundation with the help of a commercial sponsor.

Also presented on the first day of the conference were updates of federal and state child-labor legislative action, given by National Restaurant Association staff members.

Representatives from various governmental agencies and offices filled the second day's agenda with updates on federal regulatory actions, federal legislative actions and the state regulatory outlook. Also included on the second day's agenda was a speech by Dick Rivera, the president and CEO of TGI Friday's, based in Dallas. Rivera discussed the importance of preparing children for valuable adult work experiences through education and employment. Rivera is a member of the U.S. Department of Labor's Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS).

Conference attendees benefited from the positive atmosphere and energy of the speakers. "Participants left the conference with a realization of what industry associations need to do to provide a work experience that complements and enhances a student's education," said Lump.

—Linda Way

IRS tip audits spark FICA friction

It's every restaurant operator's nightmare. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) audits you. You are confident you have paid all the taxes you owe, but the IRS says you owe tens of thousands of dollars in back payroll taxes. Out the window go plans for kitchen maintenance, hiring new employees or otherwise making use of your slim profit margin.

According to reports from restaurateurs in Las Vegas and Reno, Nevada, and Orlando, Florida, IRS agents have recently begun to exploit a lucrative source of revenue in restaurant audits—the 1987 law that requires employers to pay Social Security (FICA) payroll taxes on all employee tips.

In a new twist on IRS collection procedures, tax agents now appear to be going first to *employers* to collect unpaid FICA taxes on tip income that employees never reported—but that the IRS says should have been reported.

Such was the case with Hacienda del Sol, a Mexican restaurant in Reno. The IRS audited the restaurant for tax years 1988 and 1989. According to IRS auditors' estimates, the restaurant's 25 tipped workers earned more in tips than they had reported.

The IRS told the surprised owners that the 60-employee restaurant should have paid at least $10,000 more per year in FICA taxes because of employee underreporting.

Good faith not good enough, says IRS

Hacienda del Sol is now disputing not only the IRS's method of estimating tip rates but the agency's attempt to collect employer FICA taxes on unreported income.

"There's something very wrong there," says Joe Lanza, president of the partnership that operates Hacienda del Sol and five other restaurants in California and Nevada. "We can only pay taxes on tips employees report, but the IRS wants us to pay FICA on how much it estimates our employees earned. That puts us in jeopardy for back taxes that we never could have prepared for."

Cathy Welch, general manager of Hacienda del Sol, says the restaurant posts notices explaining tip-reporting laws, includes tip-reporting information in its orientation packet for new hires and supplies employees with IRS tip-reporting forms.

"We did everything we could to comply with the law," says Lanza. "We told our employees to report their tips, paid the tax that was due and kept records of reported tips. Normally that's all you need to do. But now the IRS is coming back a year or so later and saying I owe $10,000 more a year. That could put a small restaurant owner out of business."

Restaurants are attractive targets

Gene Petersen, group manager for the IRS district office in Las Vegas, admits that Congress's 1987 FICA tax-on-tips law has made audits of establishments that employ tipped workers "extremely substantial in terms of dollars" and thus worth the IRS's time, especially in investigating casinos and relatively large restaurants.

Jeffrey B. Ross

Hacienda del Sol partner Barry Rivlin felt the pain of a recent FICA-tax sting. The restaurant company is disputing the IRS's methods.

Restaurateurs have argued since 1987 that Congress never should have imposed a payroll tax on non-payroll dollars. The recent reports of IRS audits, however, confirm the industry's worst fears about the law's unfairness: that the 1987 law gives the IRS an incentive to go after restaurants, to make widespread generalizations about tip rates in these establishments, and then to stick employers with large bills for unpaid FICA taxes based on allegedly unreported tips—even before the agency plods through case-by-case audits to verify whether individual employees actually underreported tips.

Until the FICA tax-on-tips law took effect on January 1, 1988, employers paid FICA taxes on cash wages and tips up to the minimum wage. Under current law, the IRS has the authority to collect FICA taxes on *all* tips—whether employees report them or not. The National Restaurant Association is now engaged in an all-out battle in Congress to repeal the law, which has cost restaurateurs an estimated $800 million in higher payroll taxes since 1988 and now appears to be subjecting them to even more liability.

IRS uses employer records to estimate tips

IRS audit procedures are fairly routine in these cases. According to Petersen, who has managed several recent tip audits in his Las Vegas district, agents examine a restaurant's credit-card receipts and tax forms, including Form 8027, *Employer's Annual Information Return of Tip Income and Allocated Tips*, and Form 941, *Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return*.

Using figures from these forms on a restaurant's sales, total reported tips, charge tips and charge sales, the IRS estimates what the agency feels are actual tipping rates. The agency then uses these estimates to decide whether employees underreported tip income and whether employers should have been paying FICA taxes on more tips.

Hitting the tourist areas

Restaurants in central Florida have been singled out for audits similar to those going on in Nevada.

Terry Wood, chief of the collection division in the IRS's Orlando branch, says that in January 1991 IRS investigators selected 10 restaurants to audit. With examinations of nine of the 10 restaurants complete in June 1991, the IRS announced that the audits of restaurant records had uncovered more than $800,000 in unreported tips, averaging more than $90,000 per restaurant.

The IRS says it assessed an average of $6,800 in additional FICA taxes on each restaurant because of alleged unreported tips. Wood says the IRS is now going to individual employ-

ees to collect back income and payroll taxes based on the IRS's tip-income estimates.

Wood says the IRS targeted Orlando operators because the tourism-driven city has many restaurants and because the IRS suspected a problem with tip reporting. IRS officials in Nevada concur that the busy tourism industries in Las Vegas and Reno, combined with the agency's ongoing concern about inaccurate tip reporting, led them to target restaurants for audits.

Wood says the 10 Florida restaurants were selected at random, with a bias toward those with a capacity of more than 100 persons. Petersen says the IRS in Nevada selects restaurants based on a computer analysis of tax forms to identify establishments that "deviate from the norm" in tip reporting.

Several restaurateurs involved in the IRS stings were reluctant to comment on their situation out of fear that the IRS might take further action against them.

The problem could move beyond Florida and Nevada. "IRS offices could do a tip project of this nature anywhere in the country," says Wood. The IRS's 63 district offices around the country can initiate projects to enforce whatever sections of the tax code local officials deem to need special attention. Petersen reports that IRS officials in Colorado and California have expressed interest in following the Nevada and Florida models for taxing unreported tips.

Whose responsibility is tip reporting?

In 1982 Congress passed a law known as TEFRA that stepped up tip-reporting requirements for both employers and employees in an attempt to get employees to report tips more accurately.

By increasing the amount of information that tipped establishments were required to provide to the government, Congress intended the 1982 law to help the IRS flag *employees* who underreport tips.

But now, lured by potential revenue generated by the 1987 FICA tax-on-tips law, the IRS is using the records required by the 1982 law to get at *employers* for back FICA taxes on tips that employees never reported.

Accurate tip reporting, however, depends solely on employees. An operator may sense something is amiss when an employee with $300 in sales during a dinner shift reports tips of $5. But no matter how much the employer advises the employee to report all tips, the employee alone decides how much he or she will report.

If employees decide to report less than they earned (taking the chance that the IRS won't audit them), employers have no choice but to trust the employees' signed statement of tip earnings and to pay FICA taxes accordingly. "If an employee doesn't declare a tip, how can the employer pay the FICA tax on it?" asks Welch.

Dick Johnson, general counsel for the National Restaurant Association, agrees that employers have no obligation to police employees' tip reports: "An employer can't force employees to report tips—not even with a baseball bat. Although the 1987 law clearly makes employers liable for FICA tax on *all* tips, the employer has absolutely no legal responsibility to make sure employees report their tips."

"If an employee doesn't declare a tip, how can the employer pay the FICA tax on it?"

Cathy Welch, general manager, Hacienda del Sol

IRS sees employers as police

But that's not how local IRS officials see it. Petersen contends that "the only way for the employer to prevent [being assessed back FICA taxes on unreported tips] is for the employer to require employees to report all their tips."

Petersen argues that operators should train employees to report tips accurately, keep an eye out for people who seem to be underreporting and discipline those who refuse to comply. "You shouldn't be satisfied with an employee who doesn't come into compliance," says Petersen.

"That is a perfect example of IRS intimidation," retorts Cathy Welch. "The law does not say, 'You are a police agent who must make sure that every employee reports every dollar they earn in tips.' You would be calling your employee a liar! Unless you saw exactly what came right off the tables, you can't know. What's next? Should we post a security guard to see what tips are coming off the tables?"

Industry pushes for fairness

After hearing complaints from restaurateurs in Florida and Nevada about the IRS tip stings, the National Restaurant Association and representatives of Nevada casinos (which have been the target of IRS tip audits since 1982) met with staff members of the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee, the committee that deals with tax issues, to ask for Congress to intervene to stop the IRS from overstepping its bounds.

Rep. Dan Rostenkowski (D-IL), chairman of the committee, recently wrote a letter to IRS Commissioner Fred Goldberg urging him to look into the regional IRS investigations and questioning whether IRS agents can make employers pay back FICA taxes on tips without first obtaining a definite assessment of tip income by auditing employees. Goldberg has yet to respond to Rostenkowski's letter.

Perhaps the restaurant industry's best weapon in combating such unfair audits is repealing the IRS's incentive for making such audits: the FICA tax-on-tips law. So far, restaurateurs have collected 181 cosponsors in the U.S. House of Representatives and 28 members of the U.S. Senate for H.R. 1472 and S. 765, the two bills that would restore pre-1988 law. The National Restaurant Association is working on building cosponsor lists even more.

For more information on how you can help repeal the law, contact Patti Stinger in the association's lobbying department at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5953. Or write to your elected officials c/o the U.S. Senate, Washington DC 20510 or the U.S. House of Representatives, Washington DC 20515.

—Andrew McLauchlin

RESTAURATEURS WALK OFF WITH SBA AWARDS

There's no business like small business, and these two award-winners are among the best.

by Pat DiDomenico

The owners of City Bites restaurants of Oklahoma City and the owners of Port of Subs, Inc., of Reno, Nevada, have been singled out this year as the top small business owners in their states. As part of national Small Business Week, sponsored by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), these and other state winners came to Washington DC to accept their awards and to vie for the national small-business award.

The SBA's annual awards are a showcase for the top businessmen and businesswomen who use their entrepreneurial spirit to develop a small business into a larger, more successful one.

As the owners of City Bites and Port of Subs can confirm, winning Small Business Person of the Year for their respective states has given an added boost to their businesses. Being able to market themselves as the top small business in their states will undoubtedly attract new guests (and perhaps new investors and franchisees) to their restaurants.

Deadline approaching for 1992 nominations

In 1992, the awards will again be the highlight of National Small Business Week, running next year from May 10 to 16. To be considered for an award, nominations must be delivered no later than November 5, 1991, to the nearest district office of the U.S. Small Business Administration. (For nominating procedure, see sidebar.)

The following are profiles of the two restaurant winners among the state Small Business Person of the Year awards.

Port of Subs

Although award-winners John and Patricia Larsen have followed a traditional path to restaurant success, their achievement is remarkable.

When the Larsens purchased Port of Subs in 1975, there were only two stores, and annual sales were $350,000. By 1985, the 10-store company was generating $2 million in sales.

It was in that year that the Reno-based company was restructured to become a franchising operation. Today, 65 stores employ more than 375 workers and generate an impressive $16 million to $17 million in sales each year. Port of Subs restaurants are located in Nevada, Arizona, California and Washington. Nine stores continue to be company-owned.

"Realize that you're going to work harder in this business than you ever have in your life. There are no other keys to success than common sense and hard work."

—John Larsen, SBA award winner

According to CEO John Larsen, being awarded Nevada's Small Business Person of the Year has already given Port of Subs added credibility and a range of business opportunities.

"I've had more franchise inquiries in the last few months than I've ever experienced. People are looking for honesty and integrity in a franchise. I'd say this award helped our integrity status," explains Larsen.

Port of Subs plans to add 12 to 15 more units this year in keeping with its ongoing expansion. In upcoming years, Larsen says he expects the number of new units to grow annually by 20 percent. He plans to keep the franchise centered in the currently prosperous areas of the Southwest and the Pacific Northwest. It also doesn't hurt that Port of Subs' home state, Nevada, is now the fastest-growing state in the country.

"We're based on old-fashioned conservative business principles. We don't want to grow too fast," explains Larsen.

"Our philosophy has always been to sell only as many units as we can run successfully," says Larsen. So far, only three of the 65 Port of Subs units have failed.

Much of the restaurant's success can be traced back to management style. Larsen and all his executives are "in the field" between seven and 10 days each month, providing counseling to managers and owners at each store.

City Bites, Inc.

What do a charging rhinoceros, a

five-ton wrecking ball, trick mirrors and a great sandwich have in common?

All are found at City Bites restaurants, a handful of Oklahoma City-area restaurants that even cofounder Brad Blevins admits "are a little bit weird." But in the restaurant business, an unconventional concept often means success. And, in this case, success has led to recognition.

Don't even bother asking co-owners Gary, Brad, Eric or Mark Blevins where the name City Bites originated. Just like many other aspects of the five-year-old business, part of the attraction is that the name defies explanation. "It's just two words put together," explain the owners.

The counter-service sandwich restaurant was nominated for the national business award by a group from the Canadian Valley Vocational College of Oklahoma City. This is the second consecutive year that City Bites was nominated.

The restaurant is currently experiencing tremendous success as the owners continue their slow-growth strategy. Five years ago, controlling runaway growth was the last thing the Blevins brothers had to worry about.

In 1986, they started their first 800-square-foot neighborhood sandwich shop with financing help from their grandmother. During the first year, some of the brothers worked landscaping jobs to keep up an income. But by stressing product quality, service and their unusual atmosphere, the word about City Bites began to spread.

"We operate strictly on a word-of-mouth basis. Our advertising budget is next to nothing," says Brad Blevins, who handles art and construction with his brother, Gary.

With annual eat-in and carryout sales of more than $1 million, the company expects to be constantly growing. Jack Blevins, the father of the owners, remains as the president of the company, but the concepts come from Jack's sons.

In July 1991, City Bites opened a fourth location in the Oklahoma City area. The owners hope to have at least eight restaurants in the Oklahoma City area before attempting to capture the market in another state, probably Texas or Colorado. Since receiving the Small Business Administration award, franchise offers have come in at a quicker pace. City Bites has had offers from all 50 states. For now, though, City Bites is concentrating on controlled quality.

"There are only a couple of things that a restaurant like ours can do to be different," says Brad Blevins. "You can have a different bread, and you can provide better service."

The Blevins brothers don't do anything halfway. To create a quality French baguette, they helped arrange U.S. citizenship for a French pastry chef to bake their exclusive bread. City Bites now has its own bakery that stocks all of the restaurants with fresh bread and dessert pastries twice daily. In addition to the popular pastry line, the more than 60 employees make hot and cold sandwiches in front of the customers and also offer soups and salads.

Their next trick was to create an eating area that excited the senses. Their "no-theme theme" means that each City Bites restaurant looks different—yet equally bizarre. Some features of the restaurants' off-beat decor include images such as a five-ton wrecking ball smashing through a window, broken columns that don't seem to hold up the ceiling, a full-sized rhinoceros crashing through a front wall, neon colors that seem to flow from cracks in the wall, several fire hydrants, a barber pole and the ever-popular trick mirrors that allow patrons in the bathrooms to look out over the dining area.

"There's no way to describe it. It's unlike anything you've ever seen. You just have to experience it yourself," explains Brad Blevins. Like many of his regular customers, Brad consistently talks about "experiencing" the restaurant, instead of merely enjoying a meal there. ❑

Pat DiDomenico is a communications specialist at the National Restaurant Association.

How to enter the small-business awards competition

What: Since 1963, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has annually honored one person from each state to compete for Small Business Person of the Year. The winners are picked from nominees. State winners then compete for regional awards in each of the SBA's 10 regions and then for the national award. The national winner, and 11 other U.S. business awards, will be announced during a ceremony held during Small Business Week, May 10–16, 1992, in Washington DC.

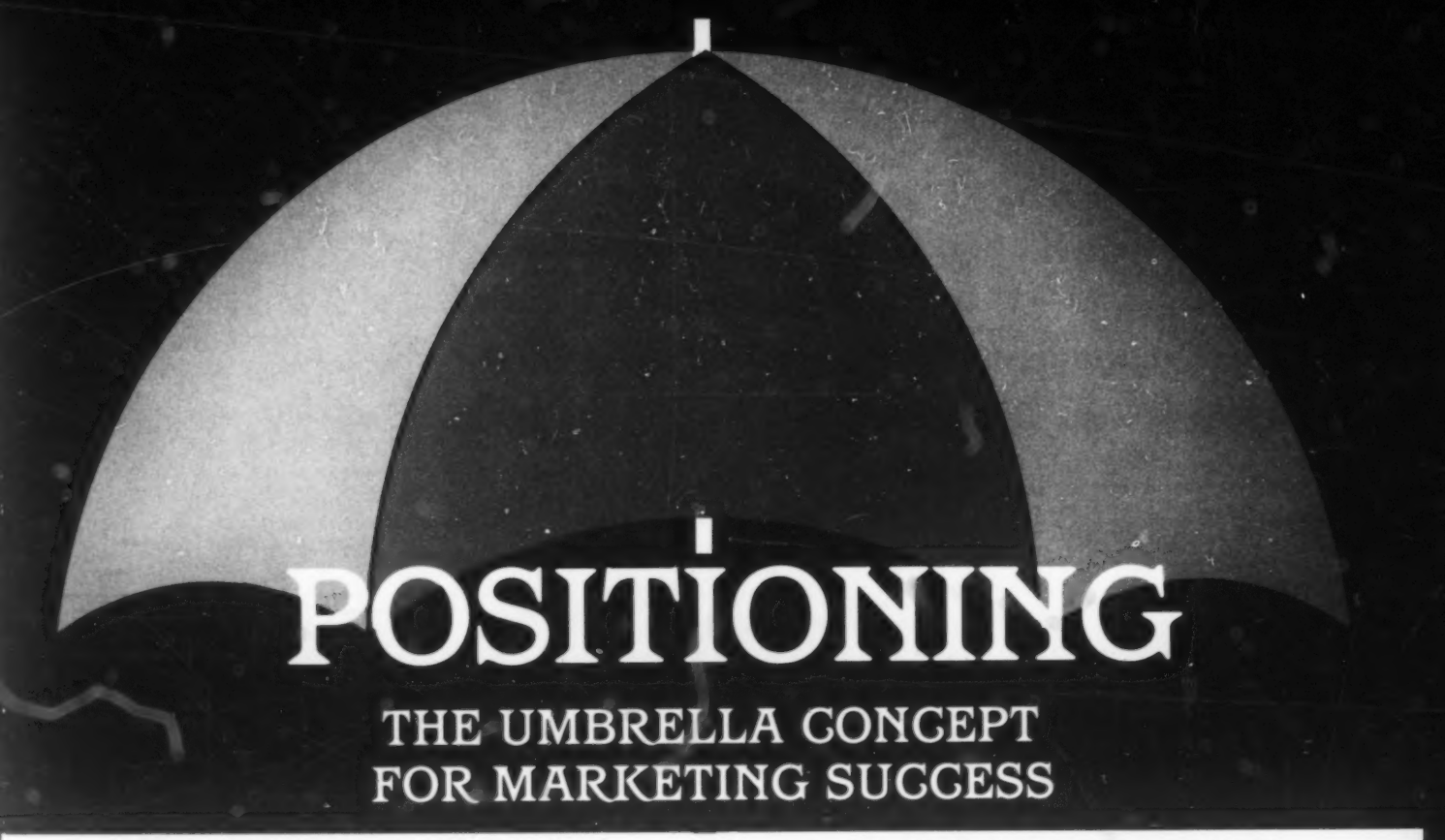
Who nominates candidates: Nominations may come from any organization or individual dedicated to the support of the local small-business community, including trade and professional associations and business organizations. Nominations often come from local chamber of commerce groups.

How to nominate a business: Nominations must be typed on 8½-by-11-inch paper and sent to the nearest SBA district office. The address of your district office and more award information is available by calling the SBA at (800) 827-5722. Nomination packets must include the nominee's (and nominator's) name, title, address and telephone number; the name of the award for which the nomination is being made; a one-paragraph description of the business; a statement of the nominee's merit for the award; details of the nominee's qualifications; a photograph of the nominee and business; a completed SBA Form 898 (available at a district office) and any additional data to support nominations.

Evaluation criteria: The criteria for winning Small Business Person of the Year include staying power, growth in number of employees, increases in sales, innovativeness of product or services offered, response to adversity and contributions to the community.

Deadline: Nominations must be delivered to district offices *no later than November 5, 1991.*

Award categories: In addition to Small Business Person of the Year, 11 other top national honors will be awarded, including Young Entrepreneurs, Entrepreneurial Success, Minority Small Business Advocate and Veteran Small Business Advocate.



POSITIONING

THE UMBRELLA CONCEPT FOR MARKETING SUCCESS

Positioning is the set of attitudes, perceptions and beliefs that your very best customer has about your restaurant. Stay on top of shaping those perceptions, and you'll have a powerful marketing tool.

by Linda Tobey

There are just three rules for establishing proper positioning in the restaurant marketplace. The rules seem simple, but in practice they may be tough to carry out.

The first rule of positioning is to *stay focused*. Once you determine what your positioning is, stick with it. Let's say you have determined that you want casual dining concepts, and you succeed with a Mexican restaurant and an Italian restaurant. Don't automatically go into fine dining and assume that you can do just as well. Stay focused.

The next rule is to *think long-term* with your positioning. You may tire of your marketing position simply because you were there when you gave birth to the concept. If it took a month or two—or even longer—to come up with your marketing strategy, then by the time your message reaches the marketplace, you may be tired of it. But you can't be fickle with your positioning.

Why? Because communicating your positioning to consumers takes time. At the very beginning, customers have zero awareness of your restaurant. Once you get that awareness, then you work for a first visit.

During that first trial, you have to confirm all the perceptions and attitudes that you worked so hard to establish during the awareness phase in order to build repeat visits. Then, you'll win good customers who hit a pattern of repeat purchases.

This trial-repeat process takes time. It doesn't happen in one month, two months or even six months. This repeat pattern may take a year or even five years to achieve. So even when you're sick to death of your positioning, it's important that you stick with it.

This has implications for your positioning. If your positioning may not change for five years, then you'd better choose a base or foundation that is so strong that you're going to be able to live with it for a long time. Does this mean you can't have new menu items? Of course not. But those new menu items must be consistent with the positioning you've set up.

And that brings us to the third rule of positioning: *be disciplined*. You must be consistent.

For example, consider what would happen if Denny's, which has worked very hard to establish a position as a family-style, inexpensive and accessible place to eat, started offering a candlelight lobster dinner. Would you rush out to Denny's? No. Why? Because it is not consistent with the positioning they have developed so successfully.

Discipline also has to do with your waitstaff: how they dress, how they greet people, how fast they serve. These decisions all must be consistent with your positioning. And what music are you playing in your restaurant? If you have a fine-dining establishment, you're not going to play rock and roll music and dress your staff in tennis shoes.

The components of positioning

Let's take a look at the components of positioning. There are three.

The first component of your positioning is your *benefit*. The benefit is probably what allowed you to get your restaurant started in the first place.

If you want to change your target audience, you'll have to change your product—and you might alienate current patrons.

Benefits are different from features. Features are the statistics about your restaurant: how many tables you have, which meals you serve, etc. Benefits are the result of having those features. For example, the result of having the feature "seats 50 people" is an intimate, romantic setting.

Benefits are emotional. Do you save people money? That's a strong benefit. Do you create fun at your place? That's a benefit.

The benefit is what you use to pull people into your concept. Think of your benefit as the reason people will come to your place that no one else can offer. You want your restaurant's benefit to customers to be unique.

Start defining your positioning by jotting down your restaurant's features and then its benefits. List them all. Put a star by the one that stands out. That's your key benefit.

Your target audience

The second component of positioning is your *target audience*. Quite simply, you must know your specific target audience. Restaurateurs often say, "We target everybody." But it's very hard for you to communicate with "everybody."

You may say, "We target women 18 to 25 years old." But there are all kinds of women with all kinds of attitudes between the years of 18 and 25. Some are college students; some didn't finish high school. Some have children—lifestyles for people in these groups are going to be very different. So consider more than just the demographics of your target market.

An important element of your target market is disposable income. How much do your customers have to spend at your restaurant?

If people love to travel and that's who you're trying to attract to your hotel, that's great. But if your guests hate to travel, and they're at your hotel because they have to be there, then we're talking about different attitudes altogether—and a different way of handling the menu and the service.

If you're in fast food, think about your target market. Are customers eating at your place because they're teenagers and it's a cool place to be seen? Or are they businesspeople with 15 minutes for lunch who want that hamburger just shot into their mouths as they drive through? These are very different attitudes and target markets, and you may need a very different product and a very different menu as a result.

It's also good to know what media your target market uses. Although that may sound technical, it's important to know that if you're trying to reach working people, for example, you shouldn't advertise on daytime soap operas.

Sometimes you may target users of your restaurant, and sometimes you may target nonusers. Let's say you have a fast food restaurant that's in a very dense area of businesses. Although the normal radius for a fast food restaurant may be 2½ miles, for this particular store the radius is only five or six blocks because it's such a dense area and you have lots of competition.

If you feel you have saturated the radius around your store, then it is possible that you want to target nonusers outside of your radius.

How well do you provide the benefit that is sought by your target market? Consider McDonald's, a company that has brilliantly marketed using the notion of purchase influence. Purchase influence refers to when there's actually somebody other than the purchaser who helps make the decision. This is what happens when a 6 to 12-year-old kid says, "Mom, Dad, take me to McDonald's." So the benefit actually sought by the target audience (the parent) is to please the child. McDonald's sells a kid-happy experience: Ronald McDonald, Happy Meals, playgrounds. It all adds up to a successful way to draw children—and their parents.

Now you may be wondering, "How the heck am I going to know if my positioning is right?" You can conduct inexpensive in-store surveys—even if it's just five questions. Give people incentives to participate. Give a free soft drink to those who will complete a survey. If you don't offer an incentive, you may only get responses from people who are angry (people who say, "I can't believe your restaurant exists, it is so bad"). And you may get only people on the other end of the scale ("this meal experience was like droplets from heaven"). People usually have to wait for some amount of time to get their food, so the chance to get a free drink for filling out a form may appeal to customers.

If you find that your typical responses are skewed, you may want to consider moving outside the restaurant location to do the survey.

Again consider fast food and target markets. Taco Bell is a good example of a company that is disciplined with its positioning. What is Taco Bell's target audience? Certainly a part of its target audience is teens. What kind of teens? Fun, loose, cool teens—they had a big television commercial campaign with M.C. Hammer, the rap artist, for example. Taco Bell's parent company, PepsiCo, has made a huge living targeting teens: Frito-Lay products, Taco Bell and Pepsi are all targeted to teens. Why? Because PepsiCo realizes that if you can establish a level of brand loyalty with teenagers, they will grow up with your business.

Look through magazines and see if you can pull out pictures of people who are in your target audience. Be able to point out a person on the street who is a member of your target audience. Be able to describe how that person lives. What excites the person? Why would that person want to come to your restaurant?

Now what about changing your target audience? What if you have a customer base of adults 21 to 40 years old and you serve subs, soups and salads. You decide you want to attract teenagers. If you want to change your target audience and your user group, then you're going to have to change your product. Because, on

the surface, subs, soups and salads are not going to appeal to teens as much as a 39-cent taco. You're going to have to create an atmosphere that's more conducive to teenagers and recognize that, if you do, you could alienate some of your adult patrons.

Practice your skills at developing positioning. Advertising is one of the very best expressions of positioning to study. You can do a lot of work at home learning about positioning by watching television. When commercials come on, turn up the volume and test yourself on the positioning that is being communicated. What's the benefit? Who are they targeting? Does it appeal to you? If not, you're probably not in the target audience.

Consider the competition

The third component of positioning is your *competition*.

First of all, think what would happen if your restaurant did not exist. Would people quit eating out? Probably not, unless you're in a very small town and you have the only restaurant in town. Otherwise, you should probably be brushing up on the competition.

Keep a file on your competitors. Clip their ads, get a copy of their annual reports, eat at their restaurants and see what it's like to be one of their customers. Learn about your competitors and then make sure your employees know about them, too.

Look at the competition and make a list of the benefits they provide to customers and who they are targeting. Remember you want your benefit to be unique to your place. And ideally your target audience would be different, too. But it may be that you share a target audience.

Also, you must be prepared for a new competitor entering the market and communicating the same benefit that you offer to your customers. In that case, shift the benefit that you use so that you continue to differentiate your operation.

What happens if you've targeted teens for years, and then the teens in your area grow up? You may want to shift some elements of your positioning message so that you're still talking to the same people. Since they are older now than when you first targeted them, their values may be different.

As the world changes, your positioning components may change. But your overall positioning needs to stay the same. The feeling, the attitudes and the perceptions that people have about your restaurant need to be consistent, even if the benefit you communicate and the target audience you communicate to changes.

Positioning is an umbrella concept for your entire marketing process. Once you have your positioning established, all kinds of opportunities are going to fall out of your umbrella: product opportunities, menu opportunities and menu pricing, for example.

The 30-second test

When you put all these ideas together successfully, you should be able to take "the 30-second test." The next time you meet someone at a party or at a trade show and the person asks, "What do you do?" or "What's your operation like?" you should be able to introduce yourself and offer your positioning statement—in 30 seconds or less. (After all, you have only about 30 seconds to make a first impression.) Then, that person should have a good sense of what it would be like to come to your restaurant or hotel. As simple as it seems, this 30-second positioning statement can be a powerful image-shaping tool.

Once you have this statement, then you can also write a positioning document that goes into detail about your benefits, your target audience and your competition. Then, for example, when it's time for you to design a direct mail piece and the designer you're working with needs to know what your business is all about, you will be able to hand the person that simple document.

You've probably been in that situation before and not been able to get across the ideas in your head. This positioning document will keep that from happening.

Positioning also gives you another powerful tool: the opportunity to say no gracefully. How many times has a vendor come to you with an idea "guaranteed to boost business." When you're skeptical, check the product idea or equipment idea against your positioning statement. Does it fit? If not, then you can quickly say, "No thanks, it's not quite right for my business."

Your positioning statement also gives you a powerful tool: the opportunity to say no.

Or say a salesperson from a Top-40 radio station calls and says, "You just have to advertise on our station." With your positioning statement in hand, you can say, "I'm sorry, but I target working men who have families at home, and they don't listen to your station."

The same is true for charitable organizations. You can't give to them all, and yet it seems that someone is always asking for money, free meals, passes and other giveaways. Although all the organizations may be great, if they are not consistent with your positioning, then you should probably graciously tell them no.

Keep in mind that you are not going to come up with your positioning statement overnight. It takes time. Ideas may hit you as you're walking down the street or when you're taking a shower. When these breakthrough thoughts happen, be sure to write them down.

When you put together your next marketing plan based on your positioning statement, you'll find that you're going to have a more profitable business. You're going to introduce the right menu items. You're going to price your products right. You're going to package your product right. You're going to promote for a reason—not just because somebody came and bugged you about it. ❑

This article was adapted from a speech given by Linda Tobey at the 1991 National Restaurant Association Show. She is a marketing consultant and speaker in Seattle.

PLATING VEGETARIAN ENTREES

No longer for vegetarians only, they're also a hit with customers who just want to eat lighter.

by Toni Lydecker

Trying to get a cholesterol problem under control several years ago, chef and restaurateur Marcel Desaulniers decided to cut meat out of his diet. With his interest in vegetarian dishes piqued, he began to experiment with vegetarian entrees, offering those he liked best to customers at The Trellis, the restaurant he co-owns in Williamsburg, Virginia. Eventually he made the "Garden Selection" an official part of lunch and dinner menus.

After eight months, Desaulniers went back to eating meat, in moderation—about 4 ounces a day, he reports. But the vegetarian entrees stayed put on the menu. The reason? The meatless dishes sell just fine, especially at lunch, where they consistently account for 7 to 10 percent of the cover count. Are that many vegetarians running around Williamsburg? Desaulniers doesn't think so. "Most people who order these entrees just want something lighter and healthier for that particular meal," he says.

Other restaurateurs, as well, are changing their thinking about meatless entrees. Rather than casually throwing together something to appease the occasional vegetarian, they are making meatless dishes creative and delicious enough to delight any customer.

Special menu positioning

The Garden Selection is the second item down on the lunch menu at The Trellis, and the prominent position is deliberate. "We get lots of compliments from customers," says Desaulniers. "People like the fact that vegetarian entrees are not playing second fiddle to other dishes."

The lunch menu tells customers that "this vegetarian entree is creatively designed to be high in complex carbohydrates and low in fat and calories." The server tells the customer what the item for that day actually is—perhaps grilled vegetables with braised white beans, or pasta with fresh tomato sauce.

At dinner, when meatless entrees are less popular, the Garden Selection falls at the end of the menu. The description gives examples of the kinds of fresh, seasonal, unusual ingredients to be used: sugar snap peas, morels, white asparagus, wild leeks, chervil, fiddlehead fern, fava beans and artichokes. But no promises are made, giving the chef leeway to pick the best produce and the most suitable cooking technique.

One night, servers might offer dinner customers a colorful array of

grilled Yukon Gold potatoes with asparagus, plum tomatoes and local spring greens, all in a fresh herb vinaigrette. Another good seller is braised green lentils with smoked tomatoes, grilled eggplant and saffron *puntalette* (a small pasta, similar to orzo).

Hong Kong's Mandarin Oriental Hotel has introduced vegetarian a la carte menus in both its Mandarin Grill and Pierrot restaurants. "It's on our room service menu as well, and is proving to be very popular. Often, when people come off a plane, they just want something light and healthy," says executive chef Jurg Munch.

Just part of the menu mix

Rather than focusing special attention on vegetarian entrees, assistant chef Carrie Kellerby lists them alongside other entrees on the menu of Boston's Cactus Club. But she always makes sure to include at least one meatless soup and entree for each daypart. Once or twice a week, one of the "at-whim" specials is a vegetarian dish, such as chiles rellenos stuffed with vegetables. And fajitas made with marinated, grilled vegetables are always on the menu.

For the customer not thrilled with those choices, the kitchen will improvise, often using pasta. Kellerby explains, "We'll use the best fresh vegetables on the line that night and, depending on what the person wants, make it spicy and Southwestern, or meek and mild with just a little cilantro and white wine. This is easy to do on a request basis."

Customers of Carrucci, located in Rosemont, Illinois, can find several interesting vegetarian dishes in the pasta section of the menu. Chef Vince Tyler especially recommends penne in roasted garlic oil with sun-dried tomatoes; homemade fettucine in a cream sauce, topped with a julienne of arugula and minced raw tomatoes and Vidalia onions; and *armoniche* (a wavy-shaped noodle) with grilled eggplant, tomato sauce and pecorino cheese.

Because pasta is available both in full portions and half portions, customers can either make it the focal point of the meal, or sample other meatless items along with a smaller portion of pasta. A popular appetizer, says Tyler, is a cheeseless pizza, perhaps with sliced tomato and olive oil, topped with mixed seasonal greens in vinaigrette.

Thinking vegetables

Vegetables don't usually come to mind in a barbecue restaurant, but at Peggy Sue BBQ in Dallas, they are anything but an afterthought. Among the menu's 10 tempting selections are pinto beans ("real ones, not canned"), fresh spinach steamed with lemon butter, sauteed vegetable medley and thick-cut onion rings in a buttermilk batter. An East Texas specialty, squash casserole that's "cheesy and not too sweet," is also featured.

The vegetables are ordinarily ordered as sides to various barbecued meats, but a message at the top of the vegetable section proposes an alternative meal choice. "Think about a plate of these as a meal," it says.

Making flavorful vegetable stock

Chef Deborah Madison's guidelines in *The Greens Cookbook* (Bantam Books, 1987) prove that vegetable stocks can be as varied and complex as meat-based stocks.

Procedures

☐ Wash all ingredients thoroughly and cut into pieces no larger than one inch square, so that flavors will emerge more quickly and completely.

☐ Stew vegetables and herbs first in oil or butter to strengthen flavors. The fat can be skimmed after the stock is chilled, if desired.

☐ Place ingredients in cold water, bring to a boil and simmer 30 to 45 minutes or until the vegetables have given up all their flavor.

☐ Strain the stock immediately after cooking. Some vegetables and herbs can turn bitter if they steep too long.

Vegetables to use

☐ Onions or leeks, carrots and celery are basic to every stock. For a stock with deeper color and flavor, caramelize the onions first.

☐ Use thick potato parings with some flesh attached for a good earthy flavor.

☐ Chard and kale add a "meaty" flavor—unlike spinach, which can turn "grassy."

☐ Tomatoes add a welcome tartness to summer stocks. Grilling them first lends a faintly smoky flavor.

☐ Even a few wild mushroom ends, sauteed in garlic, deliver enormous flavor to a stock.

☐ Fennel bulb, asparagus and peas will remain recognizable above the other elements in a stock. Use them only when the stock will be used in a dish containing those ingredients.

☐ Avoid using cauliflower, brussels sprouts, artichokes, onion skins and carrot tops, which can give the stock an unpleasant odor or taste. Use beets and beet greens only when a red stock is acceptable.

Herbs and aromatics

☐ Use garlic, peeled and unpeeled, in generous quantities to add depth.

☐ Parsley, used generously, has a grounding effect for the high, sweet tastes in vegetable stock.

☐ Warm bay leaves slowly in oil or steep in hot water to bring out their flavor.

Other flavor sources

☐ Add a handful of lentils or the broth formed from cooking other beans or legumes to a soup stock.

☐ Red miso adds a deep, beefy quality, while a little tamari or soy sauce heightens flavors. Reduce the amount of salt added if these products are used.

"In such a beef-eating region, we didn't know how it would go over," says co-owner Susan Hall, "but more and more people are asking for the vegetables. It's sort of funny to see them picking one vegetable from the green group, one from the yellow. The ones who are really serious skip the onion rings."

At Amore, another restaurant owned by Hall and her husband Marc, some customers are "editing" the Mediterranean Grill, a dish that pairs five grilled vegetables with a boneless chicken breast. "Leave out the chicken breast," they say, "and double the eggplant."

Strictly vegetarian

Every day, students at the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco can choose between two main dishes—one with meat and one without—in their dining room. The first-year and second-year students who prepare the foods receive early exposure to the proper presentation of vegetarian meals.

"We teach them that there's a difference between an entree with no visible meat and a total vegetarian dish," says Thomas Bloom, president and CEO at the academy. The students learn that a dish that is apparently meatless, but that was made with chicken stock, is not authentically vegetarian. In such a case, the menu or server should tell customers about meat-based ingredients.

Because some vegetarians (known as vegans) avoid eating milk or eggs, customers should also be alerted when the presence of dairy products in a meatless dish is not obvious.

Entrees specifically billed as vegetarian, such as the Garden Selection at The Trellis, should be free of all animal products. "We use only vegetable stocks in those entrees, and only dried pasta, because our fresh pasta contains eggs," says Desaulniers.

Ethnic flavor boost

Interesting combinations and seasonings are as important to the success of vegetarian dishes as to any others. Leaving the meat out of a meat-centered entree is easy, but it might destroy the flavor balance of the dish. Similarly, "mock" dishes in which tofu or tempeh stands in the for the beef or lobster could leave some diners feeling that they've settled for an inferior substitute.

It's no accident that two of the country's foremost vegetarian restaurants—Greens in San Francisco and Moosewood Restaurant in Ithaca, New York—draw heavily on the cuisines of other countries for their inspiration. "We set out to create a cuisine whose complexity and interest left diners feeling that nothing was missing," says Deborah Madison in *The Greens Cookbook*.

At Greens, those influences flow together into hybrid dishes such as Mediterranean Salad Plate with a colorful array of different items: lentil salad, Moroccan carrot salad, roasted eggplant, oil-cured olives and so on.

On Sundays, Moosewood's "ethnic night," the restaurant delves more deeply into the foods of a particular country. Three examples drawn from the recently published *Sundays at Moosewood Restaurant* show how to pack flavor into a vegetarian entree by drawing on ethnic cuisines.

Freshly ground spices such as the ones in garam masala—cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, coriander, cumin and black peppercorns—give Indian dishes their distinctive flavor. The fiery taste of West African food comes from ginger, dried red chilies and garlic, while yams and pumpkins add mellow accents and peanuts add a crunchy texture. In Scandinavian cooking, the earthy taste of rye and the tart flavor of pickled vegetables are prized.

At Mr. B's Bistro in New Orleans, executive chef Gerard Marais locks in flavor by serving a variety of vegetables *en papillote*. The vegetables steam in their own juices, together with herbs and butter or olive oil.

Presentation counts

"Too often, a meatless item turns out to be vegetables plated without a lot of imagination," says Thomas Bloom. A visually spectacular dish at the California Culinary Academy is tabbouleh molded in a terrine shaped like a bell pepper and presented with a red-pepper sauce. Even a shapeless dish such as a stew or casserole is more inviting as a main dish when served in individual crocks or ramekins.

"An entree at Greens is not so much a meat-like food as it is one that commands attention by its form and appearance," says Madison. It might be a layered "cake" of crepes with fillings or a rolled souffle sliced to show the spiraled pattern that makes vegetarian entrees as satisfying to look at as to eat. Vegetable gratins, with their beautiful golden crusts, also please the eye.

Several different items on a plate can add up to an appealing main dish, as well. One combination platter offered by the Cactus Club consists of black beans, chipotle polenta, a blue-corn tostada filled with fresh vegetables, and a sweet-potato/cornmeal tamale served with corn relish.

Eating such an entree, it's a rare customer who would miss the meat. ❑

Toni Lydecker is a writer in Irvington, New York.

The Savory Way wins top cookbook honor

The Savory Way, a collection of more than 300 down-to-earth meatless recipes by Deborah Madison, was recently selected as the "Best Cookbook of 1990" by the International Association of Culinary Professionals.

Madison is the founding chef of San Francisco's celebrated Greens restaurant and a frequent contributor to various cooking magazines. Her previous book, *The Greens Cookbook*, won the 1987 IACP award in the Vegetable and Fruit category.

In *The Savory Way*, Madison introduces the reader to sensible items she perfected while cooking at Greens. The book professes to be not just for vegetarians but "for everyone who enjoys exciting food inventively prepared and presented with style." It includes recipes on everything from different vegetable creations to pasta to soups and stews.

The Savory Way is published by Bantam Books.

SURVEY SHOWS INTEREST

Approximately 20 percent of all adults say they are likely to look for a restaurant serving vegetarian dishes, and one-third or more are likely to order more popular vegetarian dishes.

Results of a National Restaurant Association Gallup survey conducted in June 1991 suggest that foodservice establishments in many markets should list some main-dish vegetarian items among their offerings. Although the great majority of Americans remain meat-eaters, many enjoy vegetarian items and are likely to order them.

The study shows that interest in vegetarian items is fairly evenly distributed across the United States, with a slight preponderance in the South. Interest is higher among women and respondents aged 35 and older, and it peaks among the over-65 age group.

The study also indicates that interest in vegetarian items does not necessarily stem from a commitment to vegetarianism. When those who said they would look for a restaurant serving vegetarian items were asked why, 88 percent cited "health reasons" and 86 percent cited "taste preference."

Only 39 percent said they would choose vegetarian items for ethical reasons. Twenty-two percent cited "religious reasons," although the figure rose to 43 percent among the relatively high number of nonwhite respondents who said they looked for a restaurant offering vegetarian items.

Respondents choose specific dishes

The survey also asked consumers how likely they were to order individual vegetarian items as a main dish in a restaurant. About 20 percent indicated that they would be likely to order a meatless casserole, and a similar number indicated interest in a vegetable pizza.

Almost one-third said they would be likely to order pasta with a meatless sauce. Young adults 18 to 24 years of age, consumers with household incomes of $40,000 or more, and Easterners are significantly more likely than others to order this item.

More than 40 percent said they were likely to order a vegetable stir-fry. Again, consumers with higher incomes and also those under 45 years of age are more likely to select this item from the menu.

More familiar items ranked as most popular. Entree salad with vegetables and grains was the choice of 43 percent. The figure rose to almost 50

How often Americans eat various foods

Type of food	Eaten every day	Eaten at least once a week	Never eaten
Milk or cheese products	67%	96%	2%
Fruits	47	92	1
Vegetables grown above the ground	42	95	1
Grains like rice, barley, wheat or corn	31	90	3
Vegetables grown below the ground	30	95	0
Red meat like beef, pork or lamb	15	85	3
Eggs	11	70	10
Legumes like beans, peas, lentils	8	74	8
Chicken or turkey	5	89	2
Fish or seafood	2	68	7

Note: *The category "less than once a week" is excluded from the table. Descriptions for vegetables are as follows: vegetables grown above the ground like lettuce, tomatoes and zucchini; vegetables grown below the ground like potatoes, carrots and turnips*

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey, June 1991

IN VEGETARIAN ITEMS

percent in the Pacific and Southeast regions and to more than 50 percent among women and people in the 55 to 64-year-old age group.

Among the listed vegetarian dishes, main-dish fruit salad was the most popular, with 46 percent of adults saying they would be likely to order it. Furthermore, among women, 18 to 24-year-olds and Southerners, the odds of ordering a fruit salad are great, with more than half saying they would be likely to do so.

The study also shows which items people say they eat on a daily and weekly basis. For instance, 40 percent or more said they eat milk or cheese products, fruit and green vegetables each day. Grains (such as rice, barley, wheat or corn) and vegetables grown below ground (such as potatoes, carrots or beets) were reported to be eaten on a daily basis by about one-third of respondents.

More respondents said they eat red meat every day (15 percent) than said they eat fowl every day (5 percent) or fish every day (2 percent).

When consumption is examined on a weekly basis, the numbers even out: 96 percent said they eat milk or cheese products at least once a week, and 95 percent said the same for green vegetables. Eighty-nine percent said they eat chicken or turkey at least once a week, and 85 percent said the same for red meat.

Only 5 percent of respondents described themselves as vegetarians, but even that figure is called into doubt by responses to other questions on the survey. For instance, only 3 percent of adults reported they never eat red meat.

A 1984 survey conducted by Gallup turned up 3.7 percent of adults who said they were vegetarians and never ate meat, fish or fowl. A more recent U.S. Department of Agriculture survey put the number at 3.63 percent. ❑

Types of vegetarians

The Institute of Food Technologists in Chicago has expanded on the usual classifications and defines various categories of vegetarians as follows:

□ **Semi-vegetarians** eat dairy products, eggs, chicken and fish, but no other animal flesh.

□ **Pesco-vegetarians** eat dairy products, eggs and fish, but no other animal flesh.

□ **Lacto-ovo-vegetarians** eat dairy products and eggs, but no animal flesh.

□ **Ovo-vegetarians** eat eggs, but no dairy products or animal flesh.

□ **Vegans** eat no animal products of any type.

Considering the results of the National Restaurant Association Gallup survey, an additional classification, the "sometimes" vegetarian, might be added to include those who say they are vegetarians but who also eat red meat like beef, pork or lamb. These sometimes vegetarians represent 2 percent of the total adult population and 70 percent of those who profess to be vegetarians.

Ranking of vegetarian menu items

Rank	Item	Percent of adults likely to order
1	Main-dish fruit salad	46%
2	Main-dish salad with vegetables and grains	43
3	Vegetable stir-fry	41
4	Pasta with meatless sauce	32
5	Vegetable pizza	20
6	Meatless casserole	19
7	Meatless chili	15
8	Vegetable curry	12

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey, June 1991

PAUL SALTMAN TALKS ABOUT RESTAURANTS AND NUTRITION

An outspoken nutritionist and biology professor refuses to point a finger at specific foods as culprits—or saviors—for America's nutrition problems.

by Joan E. Herlong

Paul Saltman flinches at being called a "new wave nutritionist" or a pioneer of "the new nutrition." Author of *The California Nutrition Book*, Saltman has been a professor of biology at the University of California at San Diego since 1967. As he lectures to a wide variety of groups across the country, Saltman insists there is nothing new or trendy about nutrition, and nothing new for restaurants or their patrons to get worked up about.

"There is no such thing as the 'new nutrition,' " says Saltman. "It's just a meaningless buzz phrase. America's interest in nutrition is a lot like its belief in the Tooth Fairy and quick fixes. There are no quick fixes. For example, NutraSweet is a fine substitute for sugar. But a diet cola does not 'counteract' a chocolate sundae. People in the United States think a lot about food, but not very much about nutrition. Luckily, restaurants and chefs are becoming much more nutrition conscious.

"Nutrition is an *exact science*," he stipulates. "There's nothing 'new' about it. We have a finite need for calories. Too many, you have obesity, which leads to a host of other health problems. Too few, you have anorexia. To lose weight, it's very simple: You must reduce the number of calories you take in and increase your amount of exercise."

What is new about Saltman's approach is his refusal to point a finger at specific foods, restaurants, labels or diets as the culprits—or saviors—for America's nutrition and health problems. Instead, he emphasizes individual education and responsibility. According to Saltman's nutrition gospel, there are no good foods or bad foods, per se, but there are good and bad eating habits. Ultimately, nutrition is a matter of personal choice. As Saltman asserts, "It's not the restaurant's responsibility to replace Mom and Dad."

Any nutrition-conscious restaurateurs considering whether to eliminate the dessert menu and fire the pastry chef can hold onto their pink slips, says Saltman. The nutritional issue for restaurants is not whether to serve one particular food, or only "health" foods. The issue is one of balance.

The restaurant's role

Saltman admits the restaurant's role in promoting nutrition is complicated: "A restaurateur wants to stay in business, make money, cater to people's tastes and offer reasonable prices. Nutrition is a science, but food is metaphysical—a sensual pleasure. People go out to restaurants to enjoy their food, not to worry about what they're eating. I advocate food without fear and food without guilt. Restaurants can play an integral part in that."

Playing an integral part does not mean that restaurants should have to be watchdogs, says Saltman. "The best way for a restaurant to promote nutrition is through choice," he advises. "The average customer wants a wide choice of wholesome food beyond that which he or she gets at home. The customer wants something special. Restaurants provide a great service to their customers when they offer options with fewer calories, smaller portions and cooked with less fat." Saltman adds that offering a "diet menu" does not denigrate the rest of the menu or imply that the other fare is not as good for you. It simply clarifies choices for the individual customer.

"The restaurant's challenge is to create dishes people like and enjoy, but that are also nutrient-rich," he maintains. "It doesn't do much good to make foods that are just 'good for you' if they are not also appealing enough to eat." Saltman thinks recent menu maneuvering by fast food chains has been positive. "It gives people the option to enjoy a real hamburger with 200 fewer calories than their regular burgers."

When asked about the movement afoot to require nutritional labeling on restaurant menus, Saltman exclaims, "It's crazy, just crazy! Besides, 'cholesterol-free' or 'low cholesterol' labeling is ridiculous. Cholesterol in your *food* is not dangerous. In fact, cholesterol is a necessary component of human health. Too much cholesterol in your *blood serum* is dangerous.

"Your body manufactures 85 percent of your own cholesterol, mostly out of sugar, fat and amino acids," he explains. "You make cholesterol when you take in too many calories. When your body takes in more calories than it knows what to do with, it makes those calories into cholesterol and then starts lining the arteries with the stuff."

Saltman feels that labeling, whether it's on restaurant menus or food products, is the wrong place for government to focus on nutrition education.

"Government should actively promote and support good science education, beginning with the elementary grades, so individuals can make informed decisions on their own," he asserts. "The real issue is, 'How much do you weigh?' And *that* is a matter of personal choice.

"If people are not at an optimal weight, they cannot blame the restaurants, or the food, or their age or the labels. It's a matter of personal knowledge and responsibility," he stresses. "We do get slightly heavier as we get older, but your weight should not vary more than 10 percent from ideality."

No such thing as junk food

Saltman raises a few eyebrows when he states that there is no such thing as junk food—or health food. "But there are lots of junky diets and healthy diets," says Saltman. "All foods have redeeming value. For example, there is no sin in red meat. Vegetarianism is a religious belief, not a nutritional tenet. Red meat is a great source of protein and trace elements. But offer lean red meats. Be a gourmet, not a glutton.

"We should all have the freedom to eat whatever we choose," suggests Saltman. "But that is not to say, 'Eat anything.' What I do say is eat what you enjoy, in amounts your body needs. 'Freedom' to eat whatever we choose does not mean anarchy. The key to all freedom is personal responsibility."

What about that dessert menu? Most desserts are not exactly known for their "nutrient density." "Look, desserts are not the problem, *people* are the problem," emphasizes Saltman. "Desserts are an important part of my diet, but they are not a grotesque part. It gets back to the metaphysics of food, the pleasurable aspect. Our mothers told us, 'Eat your broccoli or you don't get dessert.' Dessert is a reward, a pleasure.

"I had a chocolate sundae on the plane coming home from a speech the other day," recalls Saltman. "I loved it, enjoyed it thoroughly! But I remembered that I had eaten that sundae when I weighed myself the next morning. The next day, I had a light breakfast of some bran, juice and a couple of pieces of cheese. Every morning, I weigh myself before a full-length mirror. Then I decide what I'm going to eat that day and how much. It's a matter of personal responsibility."

Perfect diets, not perfect foods

Nutritional fads have proven that humans don't live on oat bran or any other "wonder food" alone. But are there any "perfect" meals restaurants should try to offer?

"There are no perfect foods," says Saltman, "yet there is a wide variety of perfect diets. A diet is one's total food intake over a five to seven-day period. The goal is to provide a balanced meal, offering nutrient density within rational caloric amounts. Pizza, for example, is a near-perfect meal."

Pizza? "Yes, pizza," says Saltman. "It contains dairy products loaded with calcium, and the crust is made from grains. There are vitamin-rich vegetables in the sauce and toppings, and it contains meat, which is a great source of protein.

"A well-made burrito is also very good for you," advises Saltman. "Chicken or fish, prepared in a low-fat manner and served within a balanced meal, are also excellent choices. A chef's salad, depending upon the ingredients, can be very nutritious."

Portions play as strong a role in the nutrition of a meal as the ingredients do. Saltman's caveat about "rational caloric amounts" means pizza ceases to be a perfect meal if you eat the whole thing when your body doesn't need the whole thing.

"Restaurants like to be generous in portions," notes Saltman. "I guess it makes you feel like you're getting a bargain. But restaurants need to be more sensitive to portion issues. A lot of people don't want or need such big servings. Restaurants should offer a wider choice, not just in items on the menu, but on the size of the servings, something beyond 'adult' and 'child' portions. I would say that restaurants' biggest mistakes are serving dishes that are too calorically rich and serving too much per portion." ❑

Joan E. Herlong is a writer in Greenville, South Carolina.

"There is no sin in red meat. Vegetarianism is a religious belief, not a nutritional tenet."

"I don't think it's a restaurant's role to save the health of a nation."

HUITLAC

by Paula E. Langguth

Asking a Mexican chef why huitlacoche (hweet-la-KOH-chay) is served is like asking a French chef why truffles are served. So says Rick Bayless, chef/owner of both Topolobampo and Frontera Grill in Chicago, restaurants that seat 45 and 65 people, respectively. "Huitlacoche is one of the greatest delicacies, and it's a hallmark element of fine Mexican cooking," says Bayless. Famed Mexican cookbook author Diana Kennedy once described huitlacoche as "the ambrosia of the Aztec gods."

Like its truffle counterpart, huitlacoche, or "the maize mushroom," is a fungus. Unlike the truffle, which grows in the ground, huitlacoche is found only on ears of corn.

The versatility of huitlacoche makes it a possible menu ingredient in more than just Mexican restaurants. John Maddox, owner of the Sunset Beach Inn (renowned for its ability to sate hardworking sailors) in Cape Charles, Virginia, added huitlacoche to his legendary black bean soup and found it imparted a flavor that truly enhanced the soup. Maddox feels that the exotic, unknown nature of huitlacoche also enhances its reception by patrons. "For years people didn't think you could eat alligator, and now they're gobbling it up," explains Maddox in comparison.

Huitlacoche grown in the United States lacks the greater depth of flavor found in Mexican huitlacoche, according to Cristina Arnold, an anthropologist and the owner of El Aficionado, a distributor of rare native Mexican products. Arnold says natives describe Mexican huitlacoche as "more macho." But the milder U.S. variety is certainly popular. Josefina Howard is the chef and co-owner of Rosa Mexicano, a 96-seat New York restaurant that serves classic Mexican cuisine. She can certainly attest to huitlacoche's appeal. After all, how many chefs have a "will call" list to announce that a single *ingredient* is on the menu?

"Huitlacoche is a tremendously beautiful thing to sell if it's done properly," says Howard, who serves 35 servings of every huitlacoche dish she prepares during an average "in-season" week. Howard once demonstrated the fungus's amazing versatility by making everything from soup to ice cream during an all-huitlacoche night at the Beard House Culinary Center in New York. A favorite dish (and an extremely colorful one) that Howard recently served to a party of Mexican diplomats is a hollowed-out mango with a scoop of coconut ice cream inside, covered by huitlacoche sauce and surrounded by raspberries.

The dark, smoky-sweet, earthy-flavored huitlacoche (sometimes spelled cuitlacoche) is best purchased fresh, in quantities of 10 to 15 pounds. (Recipes call for up to two pounds of huitlacoche per six servings.) The shelf life of huitlacoche is shorter than that of most mushrooms. At $10 to $13 per pound, huitlacoche is priced $2 to $5 higher than shiitake mushrooms—but much lower than the price of its French counterpart, the black truffle. Because it grows on corn, fresh huitlacoche's availability is limited to corn's June to September growing season, which reduces the profitability of huitlacoche but seems to whet the appetite of most patrons.

Bayless, who has earned a reputation for creating authentic, traditional

CREPES FILLED WITH HUITLACOCHE

Yield: 18 crepes (6 servings)

Ingredients:
1 pound of huitlacoche
3 to 4 Tbs. of either peanut, safflower or olive oil or a combination
½ medium onion, chopped
2 cloves of garlic, pressed
1 large sprig of epazote (Mexican tea) or fresh sage, lightly chopped
2 small chile poblanos, roasted, peeled, seeded and cut into strips
1 cup creme fraiche
Salt to taste

Method:
Remove the huitlacoche from the corn cob by shucking (if applicable). Heat oil and saute onion and garlic until transparent. Add lightly chopped huitlacoche along with either the epazote or fresh sage and mix well. Add poblano chilies and let huitlacoche mixture simmer until liquid evaporates. Add salt to taste.

Prepare French crepes and fill with the huitlacoche mixture. Roll them and arrange in a casserole or individual serving casseroles. Add creme fraiche and heat through.

—Courtesy of Josefina Howard
Rosa Mexicano, New York

Nutritional information per serving (3 crepes): 228 calories, 2 grams protein, 8 grams carbohydrate, 22 grams fat, 20 mg. sodium, 54 mg. cholesterol

This truffle-like ingredien
country because of it
its versat

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Josefina Howard

is an emerging delicacy in this smoky-sweet flavor and ity in cooking.

HUITLACOCHE ICE CREAM

Yield: 1 quart (8 servings)

Ingredients:
6 ozs. huitlacoche
2 Tbs. butter
1 cup milk
3 cups heavy cream
9 ozs. sugar
¾ cup egg yolk (9 to 12 eggs)
¼ tspn. salt
A jigger of sweet sherry

Method:
In a heavy saucepan melt the 2 Tbs. butter. Add huitlacoche and cook over a medium flame until it is shiny and looks fried. Then add the salt and mix thoroughly. Place in a blender and then strain it through a fine sieve. Return huitlacoche to the same saucepan; add the milk and heavy cream and bring to a boil. Then reduce heat. Beat egg yolks with the sugar until ribbony. Fold into the saucepan. Let the mixture simmer until it thickens (145°) but **do not boil.** Strain again through the sieve. Cool mixture over ice and then pour it into an ice cream machine. As the ice cream begins to thicken, add the sherry. Will yield 1 quart of ice cream and serves approximately 8.

This wonderful ice cream can be served with a fresh berry sauce. Raspberries, strawberries, blueberries or tropical fruits are good candidates.

—Courtesy of Josefina Howard
Rosa Mexicano, New York

Nutritional information per serving:
559 calories, 7 grams protein, 38 grams carbohydrate, 43 grams fat, 154 mg. sodium, 400 mg. cholesterol

dishes, has served huitlacoche for three years at Topolobampo. "When we run it, we do an appetizer called Budin de Huitlacoche," says Bayless. The appetizer consists of two homemade tortillas layered with huitlacoche, covered with roasted tomato sauce and baked in an earthenware dish. "Because huitlacoche is expensive, I think appetizers are the best way to make it accessible to the most customers," adds Bayless.

"The dish I use most is sauteed huitlacoche with onions rolled up in a classic French crepe and covered with cheese," says Josefina Howard.

Even restaurants that serve nouvelle cuisine have added huitlacoche to their menus. At the New Heights restaurant in Washington DC, for example, the menu is a blend of classical, Indian, Southwestern and Asian foods. Chef Greggory Hill specializes in a Southwestern cabbage roll stuffed with cabbage, carrots and diced mushrooms, and topped with smoked corn sauce and roasted red peppers with huitlacoche. The dish provides plenty of color contrast and plenty of flavors. "From the very beginning, using huitlacoche was good. The only problem was the availability," says Hill. "When it's out of season, a lot of customers ask what happened because they enjoyed the flavor so much."

Availability is indeed a problem since, unlike truffles, huitlacoche cannot be easily imported into the United States. As a result, chefs must either connect with a specialty distributor or scout out their own supply source, which is what Bayless did. "We have an organic farmer nearby who lets huitlacoche grow on baby Asian corn for us," says Bayless. Even so, Bayless struggles to meet the growing demand, because most farmers know huitlacoche better as common corn smut, a crop pest.

In addition, Arnold has worked diligently to find a way to extend the shelf life of huitlacoche. And now, thanks to a quick-freeze storage method, Arnold can accommodate the newly piqued palates of huitlacoche lovers year round. There is no great difference in taste between fresh and frozen huitlacoche, according to a number of chefs who have tasted both. The difference is in the texture.

"The mushroom [huitlacoche] is slightly more crunchy when fresh, so it stands up better and can be used for a wider variety of dishes," says Arnold. Howard echoes this sentiment. "I would rather have it fresh, because frozen huitlacoche gets a little mushier. But for use in soups or sauces, it's actually easier to use if it's been frozen for a while," says Howard.

Because the "maize mushrooms" will quickly ferment, fresh huitlacoche should be cooked immediately with your own special spices and mixtures. If using the mixture within 2 or 3 days, you can refrigerate it. Cooked huitlacoche can be frozen and will maintain its consistency for approximately six months. If using frozen huitlacoche, you should thaw it rapidly using a microwave and then quickly prepare your dish.

"When the waiter offers it at Rosa Mexicano," says Howard, "he tells people it's the Mexican equivalent of a truffle—black, a fungus, and earthy tasting. This gets people's curiosity going, and once they try it, they love it and they clean the plate every time." ❑

Paula E. Langguth is a writer in Silver Spring, Maryland.

CHEFS CONSIDER ORGANIC PRODUCE

by Diane Welland, M.S., R.D.

Strawberries that melt in your mouth like candy. Sweet, juicy kernels of corn from an ear picked ripe from the stalk. There's nothing like it. That's how chef and co-owner Charles Trotter describes the organic produce he uses at his Chicago restaurant, Charlie Trotter's.

Trotter is not alone in his feelings about organic food. For countless other chefs, the taste of freshly picked produce grown without chemicals or pesticides far outweighs the

advantages of traditionally grown varieties.

"Organic products taste better than commercial," says Trotter. "The flavor just can't compare." But although taste may be the primary and most obvious reason why some chefs are turning toward organic ingredients, it certainly isn't the only one.

Some chefs make a conscious effort to choose organic produce over conventionally grown produce because of moral or health reasons. But chefs such as Ken Frank, owner and chef at La Toque Restaurant in Los Angeles, and Tamara Murphy, executive chef at Campagne Restaurant in Seattle, fell into it quite by accident.

"I like to shop for the best ingredients possible, and more and more that ends up being organic," says Frank.

Murphy agrees. "I don't seek out organic products," she says, "but about 70 percent of the produce I use in summer is grown locally and organically because it is good quality." Murphy, who frequently purchases food at Seattle's famous Pike Place Market, cites another reason for choosing organic foods: variety. "I can get 18 different kinds of salad greens at the market. You just don't get that kind of variety in commercially available produce," says Murphy.

"Green" benefits

"It's a way of life for us," says Alan Harding. Harding is the executive chef at the environmentally conscious restaurant Nosmo King, located in New York City. "We try to be as 'green' as possible, and that includes everything from recycling to buying as much organic produce as possible at the greenmarket," says Harding. Depending on the season, Nosmo King can purchase up to 85 percent of its produce from organic growers.

"We promote a clean, healthy lifestyle, which includes buying as many clean and pesticide-free products as we can," says Harding. According to Harding, organic farming does far less damage to the ecosystem than conventional methods do.

Evan's restaurant in Houston is another organic supporter. "There is a great deal of awareness regarding the potential consequences of treated produce in terms of both environmental impact and health," says Evan Daily, owner of the restaurant. Evan's tries to include one or two totally organic items on the menu every day. Daily feels that many consumers will choose organic items over commercial items, given the option.

Concern about the safety of the food supply is another reason for the rising popularity of organics. Recent publicity about pesticides, artificial ingredients and synthetic additives has spawned discontent among some chefs as well as consumers. "There's a lot of junk in our food today," says Emeril Lagasse, executive chef and owner of Emeril's restaurant in New Orleans. "Organic is all natural, with no preservatives, chemicals or anything like that. That's why we use it."

But, although organic produce may be perceived as healthier by many of the foodservice operators who use it, there is probably no difference in terms of nutrition between organic and other types of produce. "Any difference would be negligible," says David Haytowitz, a nutritionist at USDA's Nutrient Data Research Branch in Hyattsville, Maryland. Nutrient losses usually occur during transit, handling or packing. These losses are just as likely to happen with organically grown produce as they are with conventionally grown.

Not all organics are equal

Although taste is the number one reason why chefs choose organic fruits and vegetables, it is not always true that all organic produce tastes superior to commercial. "It depends on the food," says Harding. Apples are a good example. Often there is no difference in taste between organic apples and commercial, once the skin is peeled. Tomatoes, on the other hand, have quite a distinctive flavor when organically grown, says Harding. For this reason, many chefs opt to use both conventionally grown and organically grown items.

Visual appeal is another factor chefs must consider when going organic. Because organic farming does not involve the use of chemicals or growth stimulators, organic produce frequently does not look as attractive as commercial produce. But according to Trotter, this is a small price to pay. "By the time we finish preparing the food, it looks just as good as, if not better than, commercial produce." Advances being made in farm-management practices and biotechnology may help make unattractive organic produce less of a problem. "The quality of organic produce is getting better and better," says Daily.

Customer perception

Although there is increased awareness about organic products, many customers still do not understand what organic is. For this reason, many restaurateurs who use organics hesitate to market their use of organic products.

According to Harding, many people think organic means vegetarian, when in reality most restaurants that use organics offer a variety of menu items, including meat dishes. "We used to promote our organic products, but we just can't afford to be labeled a vegetarian restaurant," says Harding.

Other restaurateurs using organics do not feel a need to stress organic products. "Most of our clients come because we offer good food, not because the restaurant uses organic vegetables," says Trotter. "We provide the best food possible, and that means using organic. But frankly, the customer doesn't care whether it's organic or not, just as long as it's good." Trotter does admit that a small segment of his clientele frequents his restaurant because he uses organic products.

Restaurants that do opt to publicize their organic menu items seem to do so in order to provide information about their dishes and educate the customer, rather than to increase sales. Evan's restaurant prints "organically grown" on its menus as well as on its matchbook covers. "This is so our guests are aware that we use organic produce when they're here," says Daily. Also, the waitstaff is instructed to inform the guests when organic items are available.

Emeril Lagasse's restaurant does not advertise organic products on any printed material, but it does promote its organic offerings through an exten-

sively trained waitstaff. Both kitchen staff and waitstaff attend regularly scheduled classes in order to understand the process by which food is grown and prepared. For example, in a class on yellow chanterelle mushrooms, cooks and servers learn about when and how they grow, what to look for in a mushroom and how it is prepared in the kitchen. The servers then are knowledgeable enough about the product to explain it to customers. "We educate [our customers about organic products] through verbal presentations," says Lagasse. "Our business is mostly local and repeat customers, so they expect our staff to know these things."

Although organic products may not increase customer traffic, they do provide some indirect benefits that could improve sales. Sometimes, customers are willing to pay a higher menu price for products perceived as organic, and sometimes these products can be marketed as "locally grown" or "homegrown." The quality and taste of certain organic products may be noticeably better than commercial products, too, thus improving the chances of repeat visits.

Scott Mayhew

Nosmo King's chef Alan Harding (center) says organics are a "way of life."

Availability

Although organic food sales have increased substantially, organics still have a long way to go before they become mainstream. Currently only about 2 percent of the food grown in the United States is grown organically, but that amount has been steadily increasing.

"Organic farming is still a small cottage industry," says Katherine DiMatteo, executive director of the Organic Foods Production Association of North America (OFPANA) in Greenfield, Massachusetts. Consequently, these farmers are not as organized as those in the well-established conventional produce industry.

"It's a matter of supply and demand," notes chef Ken Frank. "Many times the supply doesn't meet the demand, but the industry has definitely improved over the years." According to Frank, advanced technology, increased demand and better distribution systems will make organic foods "the wave of the future."

Emeril Lagasse, who has been buying organically grown food for more than nine years from a farmers co-op, also sees a bright future for organics. "Over the years things have really taken off; [our co-op has grown] from just a few farmers to about 15 to 20 different farmers."

Farmers cooperatives, farmers markets and even some commercial food suppliers now make organic offerings available.

Whatever the source, using organic products does take special effort. Here are a few things to keep in mind when working with organic products.

Be flexible. Because organic farmers rely heavily on nature to provide optimal conditions, the loss of crops due to weather or insect infestation can occur without warning. The foodservice operator counting on using a farmer's arugula crop, for exam-

How to find organic produce

Organically produced foods, although not considered mainstream yet, are becoming more and more accessible to foodservice operators. Since organic farming is still a cottage industry, most of the organizations for distributing and growing organic products are local. But there are some regional groups popping up. State agricultural departments and farmers markets are good places to find sources of organic products.

Here are some other resources for finding organic growers in your area.

□ *1991 National Directory of Organic Wholesalers.* Written by the California Action Network, this 239-page book lists organic farmers, certifying agents, manufacturers and distributors. It also has a commodities index broken down by state. The book costs $29.95, plus $5.00 shipping and handling. Copies can be ordered by calling (916) 756-8518 or (800) 852-3832, or by writing to California Action Network, P.O. Box 464, Davis, CA 95617.

□ *Natural Organic Farmers Association.* This regional private certification group has chapters in the New England and Mid-Atlantic areas. To reach your state chapter, contact Jack Kittredge, RFD #2, Sheldon Road, Barre, MA 01005, or call (508) 355-2853.

□ *Organic Crop Improvement Association.* This certification agency is found mainly in the north and central Midwestern states, in California and in Canada. Contact Betty Kananen, Administrative Director, 3185 Township Road 179, Bellefontaine, OH 43311, or call (513) 592-4983.

□ *The Organic Foods Production Association of North America.* Established in 1985, OFPANA is the international trade association for the organic food processing industry. Contact Katherine DiMatteo, Executive Director, P.O. Box 1078, Greenfield, MA 01302, or call (413) 774-7511.

□ *Organic Growers & Buyers Association.* This is a private, independent, third-party certifying organization that operates nationwide. Contact Yvonne Buckley, 1405 Silver Lake Road, New Brighton, MN 55112, or call (612) 636-7933.

ple, may have to substitute watercress instead. A chef expecting to find a certain variety of wild mushrooms at the local market may find edible flowers in its place. Be ready to change a recipe if the ingredients are not available. Supply is not always consistent. Some chefs don't decide what will be on the day's menu until after visiting the market.

Although some dishes can be adapted with different ingredients, others cannot. Sometimes chefs are forced to look elsewhere when local organics are not available. Lagasse and Trotter arrange to get organic produce from big farms in Texas or California. Other chefs, like Frank and Murphy, opt to use commercial varieties. Either way, the chef must learn to be flexible and creative when dealing with organic fruits and vegetables.

Be cost conscious. There's no doubt about it: Organic products cost more than commercial ones. Hence they are more likely to be used in upscale restaurants. In fact, cost is the biggest deterrent to foodservice operators using organic produce.

Why do organic foods cost more than conventional ones? One reason is because it costs the farmer more to grow organic crops. Without pesticides and other chemicals, it takes more time and work to cultivate the plants. The other reason is simply a matter of economics. With limited supply and growing demand, prices for organics are higher.

Food costs vary, but on average, a restaurant using organic items is likely to have a higher food cost than a restaurant using conventional produce. "Even with the extra cost, I still run [a food cost at] about 29 percent," says Harding. He estimates he would have a food cost of 24 or 25 percent without the organic cost.

Surplus crops are a common occurrence among organic farmers and a good way to cut costs. A good season can produce a glut on the market, resulting in lower prices. Creative chefs can generate new menu ideas for using these products.

Labor is another issue. Buying organic produce is more labor-intensive. Frequently it requires the foodservice operator to shop around, making more telephone calls or market trips, and it often results in more deliveries. Since organic produce may vary greatly in quality, it is important to purchase carefully.

Buy in season. By purchasing organic products in season and at peak times, operators can often save money. Local products, too, are often less expensive. Since most organically minded chefs buy products only when they are in season, the chefs forgo the high cost of off-season commercial produce.

Charlie Trotter's follows this rule. "Although I pay a higher price for organic products grown without chemi-

What is "organic"?

The term "organic" in food marketing has been around for more than 50 years, but only recently has Congress decided to begin to develop national standards for defining organically produced foods. Why the new interest? Partly because there is much confusion surrounding the term "organic," and partly because sales of organic foods have been rising rapidly—from $174 million in 1980 to $1.25 billion in 1989.

According to Harold Ricker at USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, heightened concern about the environment and the publicity surrounding the use of Alar has given the organic movement "a big push."

Currently, "organic" can mean almost anything, according to Katherine DiMatteo, executive director at the Organic Foods Production Association of North America. In 1973, California set up an organic certification program to verify farmers' practices. Oregon soon followed. The term "certified organic" means the product was certified by a third party. But even that is not uniform, says DiMatteo. The certification process ensures that the farmer has followed certain standards, but the standards can differ among states and private organizations—and not all organic produce is certified. Right now there are 26 states that have laws regulating or defining "organic" in some way, and there are more than 30 private certifying groups. Four states (Washington, Texas, Maryland and Colorado) have state certification programs.

Under the 1990 Farm Bill, a provision known as the Organic Food Production Act will require all organic products to undergo third-party certification based on nationally developed standards. These standards specify that organic produce must be grown and handled without synthetic or man-made chemicals. Farmers wanting to produce nationally certified organics would eliminate most—but not necessarily all—of the pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers used in commercial farming. Only naturally occurring substances are allowed, but even these are prohibited if they are found to be harmful to the environment.

Organic farm systems will also need to follow certain farm-management practices that maintain and replenish the soil. Finally, farmers will be required to grow their produce organically for three years before they are eligible for certification. This delay is to ensure that no synthetic residues are left in the soil. These requirements will require careful record-keeping by the farmer and periodic testing of the soil and produce.

The Organic Food Production Act focuses on the establishment of a National Organic Standards Board which will develop a list of allowable and prohibited substances.

The act is scheduled to go into effect in October 1993. In the meantime, foodservice operators interested in organic products should be familiar with the following terms:

Certified organic produce: Certified to be organic by a state or private organization. Follows organic farm practices that require periodic soil testing and inspections.

Transitional produce: Produced by a grower striving to meet organic standards but not yet eligible for certification. Sometimes these products may be organically managed but, because they are grown during the three to five-year waiting period for certification, they are not yet certified.

Organic produce: Currently, produce labeled as such may follow some or all organic practices, but the growers are not certified. There is no way to determine degree of organic product.

Organic processed food: Currently, the definition is loose. The 1990 Farm Bill will require that an organic processed product contain at least 95 percent organically produced ingredients.

COD IN PARCHMENT WITH STEAMED VEGETABLES AND TARRAGON

Serves 4

Ingredients:
24 ozs. fresh cod fillet (or other firm, flaky fish) without skin, cut into four 6-oz. portions
16 asparagus spears (pencil-size), peeled
2 Tbs. tarragon, chopped
2 Tbs. shallots, chopped
2 ozs. extra virgin olive oil
2 ripe plum tomatoes, quartered
8 ozs. cooked Basmati rice
4 ozs. cooked green lentils
8 large spinach leaves
6 ozs. vegetable stock or fish stock
4 ozs. white wine
Salt and pepper

Method:
Cut cod portions to open like a wallet, hinged at one end. Place 4 spears of asparagus on one side of fish, with ends sticking out. Fold other half of fish over top, to close wallet.

Lightly salt and pepper one piece of oiled parchment paper. Pour ½ oz. extra virgin olive oil in center of parchment. Sprinkle tarragon and shallots over top.

Lay spinach on top of shallots to form a small raft. Next, layer rice, lentils and finally fish with asparagus on top. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Wedge a piece of tomato on each side of each piece of fish.

Pour ¼ of vegetable stock and 1 oz. of white wine over fish and vegetables. Gather ends of parchment paper and crimp together, sealing tightly closed. There should be one inch of space between parchment and fish.

Place packets on greased sheet pan. Bake at 350° for about 8 minutes. Carefully remove parchment parcels and place unopened in shallow soup bowls.

—Courtesy of Alan Harding
Nosmo King, New York

Nutritional analysis per serving: 456 calories, 45 grams protein, 26 grams carbohydrate, 16 grams fat, 587 mg. sodium, 94 mg. cholesterol

PAN ROASTED SALMON WITH HERB CRUST

Serves 4

Ingredients:
4 salmon fillets, 6 to 7 ozs. each
½ tspn. salt
½ tspn. white pepper
4 Tbs. Dijon mustard
1 cup assorted chopped fresh herbs: basil, thyme, oregano, dill, parsley and tarragon (or substitute others if you like)
1 cup water
2 Tbs. olive oil
1 lb. assorted greens (spinach, frisse, arugula, kale, mache, sorrel), trimmed, rinsed and dried
½ cup herb vinaigrette
¼ cup finely minced red bell pepper

Method:
Preheat oven to 425°.

Place the salmon fillets on a clean surface and sprinkle both sides of the fillets with a total of ¼ tspn. of the salt and pepper. Spread 1½ tspns. mustard on each side of fillet. Dredge each fillet in ¼ cup of the herbs, covering both sides.

Heat a 14-inch skillet over medium heat. When the skillet is hot (flick a drop of water on the skillet; if it sizzles, the skillet is ready), add the fillets and sear them, until golden on the bottom, about 30 to 60 seconds.

Turn the fillets over, pour ¾ cup of the water into the skillet around the salmon, place in the oven and bake until crusty and brown, about 2 to 4 minutes. Keep the fish warm.

Heat the oil in a 14-inch skillet over medium heat. When the oil is hot, add the greens and toss them quickly to coat with the oil. Add the remaining ¼ cup water and the remaining salt and pepper; toss, remove from the heat and drain in a colander.

To serve, place ¼ of the greens on each plate, top with the salmon fillet, nap with 2 ozs. of the vinaigrette and garnish with red pepper.

—Courtesy of Emeril Lagasse
Emeril's, New Orleans

Nutritional analysis per serving: 542 calories, 39 grams protein, 15 grams carbohydrate, 38 grams fat, 732 mg. sodium, 93 mg. cholesterol

cals, my costs are offset because I don't buy expensive Chilean grapes or South American tomatoes in the winter," says Trotter.

Savvy chefs should know which fruits and vegetables are grown at various times throughout the year. Since the produce is picked ripe rather than underripe, organic items tend to have a shorter shelf life. Thus, they are more fragile than commercial varieties.

Other foodservice operations do use commercial products out of season, but the products are not used in the same way. For example, during the summer, Campagne restaurant uses fresh organic tomatoes in salads. But in winter, out-of-season tomatoes that are not organically grown are used in stews or sauces where the flavor is not so pronounced.

Another option is to freeze extra quantities for the winter, when items are not available. That's what Nosmo King chef Alan Harding did when he bought a large supply of surplus cherries. "I made cherry marmalade and put it in the freezer," says Harding. "Sometimes I even make batches of plum tomato sauce and freeze it." All in all, using only seasonal produce requires a little more ingenuity, but the results can be rewarding.

Start small. For foodservice operators who want to use organic products, it is important to gradually introduce these products to the kitchen staff. Start with one or two items. Remember that organic products need not make up an entire meal or dish. Organically grown tomatoes on a salad, or a side dish of organic vegetables are examples of ways to start.

Don't be afraid to use both commercial and organic products together. Few restaurants use only organic fruits and vegetables. Many operators use large amounts of organic products in the summer and small amounts in the winter.

Finally, make sure your organic products are from a reputable source and build a relationship with that supplier. If possible, work directly with a grower. Sometimes a farmer can grow a particular item specifically for the restaurant. Another alternative is to contact local restaurants to see whether there is interest in forming a cooperative with local farmers.

All in all, using organic produce does take more effort than commercial. Emeril Lagasse sums it up best: "It's not always easy working with farmers. It takes a lot of time and commitment. But it's well worth the effort." ❑

Diane Welland is manager/staff nutritionist at the National Restaurant Association.

Photo courtesy of North Star Pub

FALL AND WINTER PROMOTIONS

Follow the lead of these four successful promoters and give customers an excuse to celebrate fall and winter holidays at your restaurant.

by Jennifer Batty

The days near the big fall and winter holidays can be days of flagging business for restaurants, as customers save their pennies for holiday outfits, presents and travel. But you don't have to give in to the holiday business blues. Build promotions around the less well-known holidays, and feature events to extend the holiday spirit. Creative promotions may be the spark needed to heat up your fall and winter business.

Oktoberfest

During Oktoberfest in Germany, people crowd into beer gardens to sing songs, to listen and dance to oompah bands, and to try to out-toast each other with brimming mugs of dark, frothy beer. That festive mood has been successfully captured by many restaurants in the United States, including The Weeping Radish Restaurant and Brewery in Manteo, North Carolina (a resort area on the Outer Banks).

The owners of The Weeping Radish hold three "fests" a year, with two occurring during the fall months. In addition to early fall's Oktoberfest, an Autumn Fest is held in November, "to give a little spark to the area. It gets pretty boring around here after the summer," says business manager Peggy Smith.

Oktoberfest is the largest event the restaurant holds, and it lasts for three days: Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The restaurant promotes the event through a newsletter that goes to customers on the mailing list, and advertisements are placed in the local newspaper and on the radio. Smith also puts ads in the Raleigh, North Carolina, and Norfolk, Virginia, newspapers.

"We get people from all over the country for this event—there are families that plan their vacations around Oktoberfest. They start calling about now asking when it will be held so they can be sure and make it," says Smith.

Several months before the Oktoberfest celebration, the staff puts up posters advertising the event. Customers are encouraged by the waitstaff to fill out entry forms to win a trip for two to Bavaria that will be awarded during the fest. The restaurant supplies the housing and transportation for the winner while in Bavaria, and American Airlines (in conjunction with a local radio station) furnishes the air transportation. To encourage attendance, entrants must be at the restaurant's Oktoberfest celebration during the drawing in order to win.

The colors of the Bavarian flag are echoed by the blue-and-white streamers and balloons the staff puts up in the restaurant. Balloons are also affixed to the fence bordering the property. The jauntily bobbing balloons help to draw attention to The Weeping Radish from passing motorists, because the restaurant cannot be seen very well from the highway, says Smith.

During Saturday and Sunday of the celebration, there are children's activ-

ities like button-making, face-painting, games and a balloon sculpturer. "We didn't used to be open during the day [for Oktoberfest], but we were filling up by 5 p.m. People had to wait so long to get in that we decided to hold it during the day as well. Now we find a lot of families are coming during the day so the kids can enjoy the fest as well," says Smith.

For this event, the staff members set up an outside beer garden adjacent to the restaurant. Pork barbecue, sausages, marinated pork chops, Oktoberfest chicken and hot dogs are cooked outside. Accompanying these items are sauerkraut, sauerbraten and their apple strudel for dessert. Admission is free, and fest-goers buy food and drinks a la carte; a customer spends anywhere from $3 to $9 for a main dish.

Inside the restaurant, chairs and tables are lined up fest-haus style with communal seating. At night, people move into the restaurant to listen and dance to authentic German oompah-pah bands.

A few of the customers initially experience polka anxiety. "We always see people who feel very silly at first listening to this music and doing the polka. But eventually they get into it. With all the toasting and singing, it is a really festive atmosphere. People get caught up in it," says Smith.

Children especially like the music and the traditional German outfits worn by the band members and dancers. "The kids really enjoy the oompah bands, and they get out there and dance," says Smith.

As customers enter the fest, they have the opportunity to win door prizes: mugs, T-shirts and other items given away every hour. The festive spirit is transmitted over the airwaves by remote radio broadcasts from the restaurant by a local disc jockey.

"The best part about holding the fest is the goodwill it generates among our customers. I don't think we would ever dream of not having the fest; it would just disappoint so many people," says Smith. "The only people who don't enjoy it are the ones who thought they were coming here for a regular dinner, and then they show up and there's this wild party going on."

Columbus Day

Although he sailed on behalf of Spain, Christopher Columbus was Italian. In 1992, Columbus Day will receive greater attention than usual, because it will be 500 years since the adventurous Italian landed in America. When Columbus sailed forth in search of the fabled continent, he carried with him many Italian herbs and spices that later became integral to our culture. Anna and Filippo Frattaroli, owners of four restaurants in the metro Boston area, pay annual homage to Columbus—as well as to Italian cooking—by highlighting cuisine from Columbus' native region of Liguria on Columbus Day.

Via Veneto, where the promotion is held, is a regional Italian restaurant where Filippo Frattaroli, as chef, introduces his customers to the dishes he enjoyed as a boy in Sulmona, Italy.

"We were looking for a holiday that could be an annual celebration for us. Because we are an Italian restaurant, it seemed natural for us to hold a Columbus Day celebration," says Anna Frattaroli.

Last year Via Veneto's Columbus Day promotion was held on October 8, and the $35 tickets to the event were sold out almost a year in advance. "We wanted to keep it a small event, but we still ended up serving 250 people because there was such a demand," says Anna Frattaroli. The proceeds from the event are donated to local and national charities.

The event was easy to promote. "Boston has a very strong Italian community. There were so many people who wanted to be involved in the celebration that we told some of our customers about it, and the word spread," she says. The Frattarolis also sent press releases to members of local news media and to customers on the restaurant's mailing list.

Filippo Frattaroli is a member of an association of Italian restaurateurs, and he travels to Italy with the group to do research for his cooking. He has worked out an exchange program with several Italian chefs. Each year he asks one of them to come to Boston and cook for the Columbus Day celebration.

During the week preceding the celebration, the visiting chef cooks for a couple of days in each of the Frattarolis' restaurants. Customers may order from either the regular menu or from the visiting chef's regional menu. Anna Frattaroli says that this helps to build the excitement for the Columbus Day celebration. "We have had wonderful chefs come here. They are very eager to come to Boston and cook for Americans and see a bit of the country. My husband has

Photo courtesy of Penwick House

Audrey Davenport welcomes diners to the Penwick House each year for a two-day pre-Christmas show.

Photo courtesy of Via Veneto

Boston's Filippo Frattaroli stands in front of the Columbus Day mural commissioned by Via Veneto

chefs lined up for years to come," she says.

On the day of the Columbus Day celebration, the restaurant closes to the general public, and ticket-holders are invited to come for a reception with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres at 6 p.m. The reception lasts for an hour, and then the guests sit down to a five-course dinner at tables decorated with Italian spices and yards of colorful silk. "We collected the decorations on our trips to Italy. Each table is dressed completely differently, with objects that Columbus would have brought with him," says Anna Frattaroli.

In keeping with Columbus Day, there is a nautical theme to the decorations, including a giant ship's mast. The waitstaff wears Renaissance-style hats with feathers, and the hostesses dress in regional costumes from Italy.

For that one night, the whole restaurant is open to the customers, and they roam through the kitchen and see the chef at work. "Sometimes the chef may even put them to work," she says.

Last year's guests danced to an Italian band that played traditional songs and current hits after dinner. "They played songs that many of the customers hear on the Italian stations here in Boston," says Anna Frattaroli.

Guests were also given confetti, which is a delicate sugar candy. "In my husband's hometown, you wouldn't think of having a celebration without confetti. It brings you and your guests good luck," she says.

Boston is already planning a big 500th anniversary celebration for next year's Columbus Day, and the Frattarolis have begun preparing as well. "We wanted to contribute something to the festivities that would continue after the celebration, so we commissioned an outdoor mural," says Anna Frattaroli.

The 40-foot by 40-foot mural, a tribute to Columbus and Italian culture, was painted on the outside of the restaurant over a three-month period.

"At first we considered covering it with a big cloth and then unveiling it the day of the celebration, but then we decided to let people watch and see what we were doing," says Anna Frattaroli. And watch they did. "Crowds were gathering outside; we were stopping traffic. We got a lot of attention in the newspaper. It was great PR for the restaurant," she says.

The Frattarolis are busy preparing for this year's Columbus Day celebration, and they have only a few tickets left.

Photo courtesy of North Star Pub

Free English sausages and mashed potatoes were given out to revelers at the North Star Pub's Boxing Day celebration. Here, a customer drinks from a "yard of ale."

Extending the Christmas season

Christmas promotions do not have to be limited to December 25. You can extend the holiday cheer all through December. The Penwick House is a country inn in Dunkirk, Maryland, that specializes in southern Maryland cuisine. And the owners have found a way to draw customers to their establishment with a pre-Christmas promotion.

Twenty-six years ago, an area garden club wanted a professional to show them how to decorate their homes for the holidays, says Vikki Flaherty, manager of the restaurant. At that time, her mother, Audrey Davenport, was an active member of the club and decided to secure a plastic tent next to their family's decorating shop and put on the demonstration.

"We had the worst storm of the season and it was freezing cold, but people still came out and enjoyed themselves. So we thought that if they came out in bad weather in a plastic tent, then they'd come out in good weather in a comfortable setting," says Flaherty.

In 1979, her mother and her father, Donald Davenport, opened the Penwick House and continued the tradition of the "Christmas Greens Show." It is held the first weekend in December (inside the restaurant) and each year there is a different theme. Last year's theme was "A Victorian Christmas," and this year's is "The Essence of Christmas." "We picked that theme because of all the wonderful smells associated with the season—fresh pine, potpourri, and cookies and breads baking," says Flaherty.

Flaherty sends flyers to customers on the restaurant's mailing list and advertises in the local newspapers and in the Annapolis, Maryland, newspaper.

The show lasts for two days, and there are two or three demonstrations given each day. Flaherty says the dining room usually fills to capacity for each demonstration. Flaherty schedules the show to fall in between lunch and dinner, so that even though the show is free, many of those attending come early and enjoy a meal before

the demonstration or stay late and eat dinner.

Vicky Trego owns a crafts store called The Shop at Penwick, adjacent to the Penwick House restaurant. Trego shows those who attend the show how to make centerpieces, wreaths, ornaments, trimmings—and how to decorate a tree. The demonstration lasts about an hour, and Trego has products the attendees can buy to make the objects she describes, or customers can order one to be made for them.

"The show brings in lots of people, and they see how pretty the restaurant is decorated and how festive it is. Then they arrange to bring an office party back here or a garden group. It really encourages local organizations to hold their meetings here," says Flaherty.

"We're out here a little ways," says Flaherty, "so we have to give people more of a reason to come out here—something to make us a destination spot. So far this has worked really well."

Boxing Day

Christmas Day is over. All the presents have been opened, the turkey's been eaten and the carols have been sung. Now there's nothing to look forward to. Or is there? You can follow the North Star Pub's example and relieve your customers' post-holiday blues by holding a Boxing Day promotion on December 26.

Boxing Day is a national holiday in Canada and the United Kingdom, celebrated on the first working day after Christmas. It is based on the feudal custom of the lord of the manor "boxing" up food and clothes to give to the poor. This custom has changed over the decades so that today, those observing the holiday give gifts to tradespeople or others who have been of service.

"Christmas Day is spent with your family in England, but Boxing Day is spent with your friends, usually down at the local pub," says the North Star Pub's general manager, Deven Black. "We wanted to give people a chance to celebrate with their friends."

The North Star Pub is a small, traditional British pub in New York City. The pub began celebrating the holiday in 1983 as a sort of "thank you" party for customers. Each year the event grows, with last year's promotion drawing 700 to 800 people to the 1,250-square-foot operation, says Black.

Adhering to the original purpose of Boxing Day, the pub asked those who came to the event last year to bring clothes and nonperishable food items, which were collected and given to the Coalition for the Homeless. Beginning on December 17, a free Imperial pint of ale was given to customers who brought in food or clothing.

Black sends out press releases to local newspapers, radio stations and television stations, and it usually pays off with a prominent mention right before the event. "All the food writers are on our mailing list, and we send them notes reminding them that Boxing Day is coming up. Boxing Day is a slow news day, so we know there is a good chance that we'll get a mention if we let the news media know about the event," says Black.

The pub's owners spend as much time on public-relations efforts for the British media as they do at home. "We have regulars from Europe that we see only once or twice a year, but this is a big factor in building our business. We know that they tell their friends in England about us. It is amazing how many people come here straight from the airport," says Black.

The event is also advertised in the pub's irreverent newsletter, which is sent out about six times a year. "The newsletter is very effective. We send 350 to 400 to New York and the surrounding areas, and 400 more go to people in 49 states and to Europe," says Black.

Located in the South Street Seaport tourist area, the pub draws a lot of out-of-towners, as well as Wall Streeters, British bank employees and other members of the English community. But Boxing Day draws a much broader crowd, often exceeding the pub's dimensions and the owners' expectations.

"The first time we did this, we didn't know it would be so successful and we ran out of everything. We order more of everything every year, but we still keep running out," says Black, not really complaining.

Last year the festivities on Boxing Day began at 11 a.m. and lasted until the pub closed at midnight. Customers were given free bangers and mash (English sausages and mashed potatoes) but paid for their drinks. Revelers were also given Christmas crackers. These crackers "bang" when the ends are pulled, revealing a gaudy paper hat, a toy or game, and witty sayings or jokes.

The pub gave away half a ton of bangers and mash last year and ran out of its supply of 600 crackers by 6 p.m. Throughout the day there were morris dancers in traditional costumes performing ancient folk dances, and there was a Banger Bash to see who could consume the most bangers in two minutes.

There are no decorations put up in the pub for the event. "When you have hundreds of people in here wearing gaudy paper hats in every color imaginable, you don't really need much else," says Black. ❑

Jennifer Batty is a communications specialist at the National Restaurant Association.

Fall and winter promotional dates

Columbus Day. October 12, 1991, is the official Columbus Day, but the national holiday (which workers may have off) is Monday, October 14, 1991. Next year, Columbus Day falls on Monday, October 12, 1992. Next year's Columbus Day will mark 500 years since Christopher Columbus landed in America.

Oktoberfest. In Germany, Oktoberfest is celebrated from the middle of September until October 31. For restaurant promotions, you may want to block off the entire month of October for promotional events. Some cities have an Oktoberfest celebration that restaurants can tie in with.

Boxing Day. In England and Canada, Boxing Day is celebrated the first working day after Christmas. This year's Boxing Day is Thursday, December 26, 1991. Next year's Boxing Day is Monday, December 28, 1992.

EASING THE BUYOUT PROCESS

by Mark E. Battersby

A recent IRS ruling may make the use of a buyout life insurance policy even easier, in the case of the death of an owner.

One of the most difficult things for the owners of any restaurant business to plan for is the death of one of the owners. Recently, however, with one specific ruling, the Internal Revenue Service may have helped in one area: the use of life insurance for buying out the shares of a deceased owner.

How does the ruling help? It paves the way for every incorporated restaurant that wants to take advantage of the more favorable partnership buyout rules to legally do so.

"What does that mean?" you may ask. In essence, the IRS approved the practice of transferring life insurance policies from a corporation to a partnership as long as both entities have the same owners. This simple move permitted one group of partners to take advantage of a partnership buyout after the death of one of the owners, rather than having to carry out the far more difficult corporate buyout that had been planned.

The effect on restaurants

It is common for closely held foodservice corporations to have an agreement among the owners that either the corporation or the other shareholders will have the right to buy the stock of a shareholder who dies. Obviously, this allows the remaining shareholders to continue the business without having to deal with a deceased owner's heirs or with

The buyout insurance strategy

Who may benefit? Closely held foodservice corporations.

What's the strategy? Taking advantage of favorable partnership buyout rules.

When it's useful: When remaining owners are purchasing the shares of a deceased or retired owner.

How it's done: By transferring buyout life insurance policies from the corporation to a partnership, and by purchasing the deceased owner's shares with the life insurance proceeds.

The result: Substantial tax savings for the remaining shareholders and for the corporation.

other persons to whom that owner might have transferred the stock.

It is also common for the buyout obligation to be financed with life insurance policies provided by either the foodservice corporation or the owners. These policies are usually payable either to the corporation or to the other owners. On the death of an employee-shareholder, the proceeds from the policy are available to fund the purchase of the deceased person's stock.

This is particularly advantageous for all concerned when you consider that life insurance proceeds paid on account of death are usually excludable from income. Unfortunately, tax problems can arise when a foodservice corporation uses this method of buyout.

First, the payment of life insurance premiums on the lives of employee-shareholders is not a tax deductible expense of the corporation when the corporation itself is the beneficiary.

Second, the receipt of life insurance proceeds can subject a corporation to the alternative-minimum tax.

Third, if a corporation buys the stock of a deceased shareholder, the remaining owners of a regular corporation (known as a C corporation) do not get a stepped-up basis in their stock. In other words, the book value of the stock held by the remaining shareholders remains the same, even though their ownership percentage of the outstanding shares has increased.

If, however, the restaurant is operating as an S corporation (in the manner of a partnership), the shareholders' basis in their stock is increased by their share of nontaxable income, such as insurance proceeds. This stepped-up basis may prove advantageous in terms of tax liability.

Under our tax rules, all amounts that are (1) received under a life insurance contract and (2) paid by reason of the death of the insured are usually excludable from the beneficiary's gross income. Both conditions must be satisfied if the amounts received are to be excludable as life insurance. It makes no difference who pays the premiums on the policy or whether the proceeds are received by an individual, a partnership or a corporate beneficiary.

How to get the advantage

The best way to use life insurance to fund the buyout of an employee-shareholder is to form a partnership made up of the shareholders. The purpose of using a partnership is to allow the owners a stepped-up basis in their interests once the deceased or retiring owner is bought out and also to avoid the alternative-minimum tax.

Using this method, the shareholders of a closely held foodservice corporation form a partnership, with themselves as partners. The partners have the same ownership percentage in the partnership as they do in the corporation. The partnership then owns the life insurance policies.

When one of the partners dies, insurance proceeds increase the remaining partners' bases in the partnership interests because the proceeds of the insurance policies are exempt from tax. Thus, these proceeds can be distributed to the remaining owners tax free.

The partnership agreement should allocate the tax-exempt income from the policies to the surviving partners so that the proceeds can be distributed tax free. The remaining employee-shareholders can then take the insurance proceeds and purchase the deceased owner's stock, thereby increasing their bases in their ownership interests.

Under the arrangement approved by the IRS in its ruling, a corporation that owned an insurance policy on the lives of the employee-shareholders was permitted to transfer the policies into a partnership. The transfer by the corporation was made as a partial payment of annual rent to the partnership under a lease for the business site.

In this situation, because the transfer of the life insurance policies was made from a corporation to a partnership (both entities having the same owners and ownership interests) in part payment for rent due to the partnership from the corporation, the IRS privately ruled that the life insurance policy proceeds would be excludable income.

It goes without saying that the form in which the restaurant business is operated has an effect on how all its income is taxed and the rules it must "play" under. Basically, there are three main business entity forms.

1. Sole proprietorships. The ordinary net profit or loss of the restaurant is included in the sole proprietor's income tax return. Usually, the sole proprietor is the business.

2. Pass-through entity. Distributive shares of the ordinary net profit or loss of the foodservice business are passed through to the individual partners or S corporation shareholders and reported by each of them on their own personal income tax returns. The entity itself has its own life independent of its partners and shareholders.

3. Regular corporations. The regular or C corporation is a separate taxable entity that has not chosen to be taxed like a partnership. As such, it has a life of its own as well as its own tax bill. Shareholders generally receive only dividend income.

A single-owner foodservice business can be operated as any of above forms.

When it comes to multiple-owner businesses, the owners can choose to do business as a partnership, a C corporation or an S corporation. What's more, a variety of combinations are possible. A corporation may be a shareholder in another corporation or a partner in a partnership or a joint venture. A partnership may be a shareholder in a corporation or a partner in another partnership.

Questions may exist as to whether corporate shareholders can form a partnership solely for the purpose of making use of the more favorable partnership rules as they apply to insurance on the lives of employee-owners. Therefore, it would be prudent to make certain that a reasonable business purpose exists for the partnership's existence.

In the case on which the IRS recently ruled, for example, the partnership was in existence to own assets that the corporation leased from it and used in its business.

In sum, using the corporate form of operation doesn't necessarily preclude using a partnership to make a buyout easier—and less costly. ❑

Mark E. Battersby is a financial adviser and writer in Ardmore, Pennsylvania.

#120

Insurance?

I recently received renewal notices for all the insurance coverages we have, and I was flabbergasted. When I looked at the amounts, I thought it was some sort of joke—or at least that someone had mixed up our file with somebody else's. I placed a call to our insurance broker to register my disbelief, and in the course of our conversation I rapidly progressed from astonishment to disillusionment to rage. Here's what happened.

Me: I just received the premium notices for our insurance coverage, and the costs are way out of line compared with last year's. These figures are anywhere from 25 percent to 200 percent higher than what we paid a year ago. There must be some mistake. We didn't increase any of our coverages, and we hardly had any claims.

Broker: Well, actually, there are no mistakes. I shopped your policies around to a number of the carriers, and what you received are the very best quotes I could get. Any other rates would have been higher still.

Me: That's ridiculous. We haven't filed any major claims for years. In fact, I suspect we are on a "preferred risk" list. We've paid our premiums regularly and have never bothered anybody. We are about as good as any insurance company would want a customer to be.

Broker: Well, that's true certainly, but that has little to do with rate-making. The loss ratios of the insurance companies are pretty high, so other insureds must be filing some big claims. Natural disasters such as hurricanes and earthquakes also increase claims, even though they occur in other parts of the country. The investment returns of the insurance carriers, while OK, have not been spectacular, so they're not fully covering their claims losses on the investment end. Thus, they raise rates.

Me: But I can't be responsible for others filing big claims or for natural calamities, and I don't think I should have to take a hit because the insurers didn't do better with their investment portfolios. I can even understand a little rate increase, perhaps 4 percent or thereabouts, in keeping with inflation. But double-digit and triple-digit increases are preposterous. I won't pay it.

Broker: Well, OK, if that's what you want to do. We'll just let the policies expire. You won't have to pay the premiums, but then again you won't have any coverage either, if something were to happen. Going bare, so to speak, really puts you at risk. And I won't make my commission.

Me: I don't give a hang about your commissions. What are my alternatives?

Broker: Well, you could reduce your limits of coverage, raise your deductibles on standard policies, self-insure at lower levels and bring in coverage for catastrophic losses, increase employee contributions on the policies covering them, go for more coinsurance, or eliminate some fringe coverages, among other things. Or, you can always punt.

Me: Very funny! Why didn't you look into all those things for me and give me the range of options that you just enunciated?

Broker: I did. What I gave you is my best recommendation as a professional knowing you and your organization as I have through all these years. I knew I'd be hearing from you, though, sooner or later. I guess it's sooner.

Me: You're darn right it's sooner. Now I've got to crank this increase into my total revenue/cost mix, and the cost side of it for insurance and everything else keeps going up. I don't have much blood left.

Broker: I know what you mean. It's the same situation in my business.

Me: Like blazes it is. I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to print up a separate menu, a special menu just for you and your associates in the insurance industry who come in here. That menu is going to have prices that are 25 percent to 200 percent higher than the regular menu. I'm going to do that because you people in the insurance business are so "special." Besides, my investment portfolio is down, too, so I have no other choice but to raise the menu prices for anyone in the insurance industry.

Broker: You can't be serious.

Me: And one more thing. I'm going to get another insurance policy. I want an insurance policy that gives me protection against exorbitant premium increases in the future.

Broker: You can't do that!

Me: Just try me!

Fisher's Law #120: *In*surance is misnamed. With what we have to pay, it should be termed *out*surance.

The National Restaurant Association's Information Service and Library has the answers

Call (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960 Monday through Friday between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Eastern Time) and a library specialist will be happy to assist you.

CREST* report—spring 1991

Customer traffic advanced a scant 0.6 percent in the spring quarter of 1991 over the spring quarter of 1990. This growth is lower than the 1 percent advance in traffic posted in the winter quarter of 1991, but the increase comes on top of a 5 percent gain in traffic recorded in spring 1990.

Quickservice restaurants were the only segment to show an increase in customer traffic in the spring quarter, with customer counts up 1.3 percent above the spring 1990 quarter. Traffic declined at both midscale and upscale restaurants in the spring of 1991, falling 0.3 percent and 2.6 percent, respectively.

Among the three major meal periods, supper posted the largest advance in customer counts, growing 1.1 percent in the spring quarter of 1991. Breakfast and lunch also posted increases in traffic, as counts rose 0.8 percent at breakfast and 0.3 percent at lunch, compared with spring 1990 levels.

On and off-premises highlights

On-premises traffic declined in the spring quarter, falling 0.9 percent, compared with spring 1990 levels. At the same time, off-premises traffic advanced 2.3 percent in the spring quarter.

All three industry segments registered declines in on-premises traffic. Of the three, the upscale segment recorded the largest decline (2.6 percent), followed by midscale (down 1.2 percent) and quickservice (down 0.1 percent).

Among the three main meal periods, however, breakfast recorded an advance in on-premises traffic (1.2 percent) in the spring of 1991, compared with the spring of 1990. On-premises traffic declined 2.5 percent at supper and was unchanged at lunch.

Both midscale (up 5.5 percent) and quickservice (up 2.2 percent) establishments experienced a rise in off-premises traffic, while off-premises counts dipped 2.6 percent at upscale restaurants.

Among the three meal periods, supper registered the highest growth in off-premises traffic in the spring (up 5.1 percent), followed by lunch (up 0.8 percent). Off-premises traffic for breakfast was unchanged from spring 1990.

Promotion use

The percent of occasions on which a deal was used was slightly lower in the spring quarter of 1991 than it was in the winter quarter—23.0 percent, compared with 23.4 percent. Nevertheless, promotions were still used on substantially more occasions in the spring of 1991 than in the spring quarter of 1990 (20.2 percent of occasions).

Among the three industry segments, quickservice restaurants continued to have the highest rate of deal usage—25.9 percent of occasions on deal. This compares with 22.2 percent of occasions on deal at quickservice restaurants in the spring of 1990. In spring 1991, deals were used on 17.2 percent of midscale occasions and 16.4 percent of upscale occasions, up from 16.5 percent and 14.8 percent, respectively, in the spring quarter of 1990.

Supper had the highest rate of deal usage among the three main meal periods in spring 1991—29.9 percent of supper occasions at a restaurant involved the use of a deal, up from 27.0 percent in spring 1990. Deal usage at breakfast and lunch was lower than that for supper (17.4 percent and 21.2 percent, respectively) in the spring 1991 quarter, but deal usage was up for both meal periods from spring 1990 levels (17.1 percent and 17.9 percent, respectively).

Average check size

The average eater spent $3.94 on a restaurant meal or snack in the spring quarter of 1991, just 0.3 percent higher than the $3.93 average check in spring 1990.

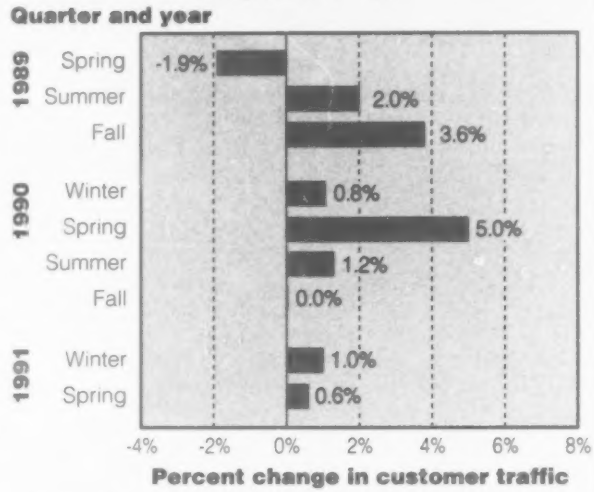
Midscale restaurants posted the largest advance in the average eater check, with a 1.9 percent increase (from $4.75 per person in spring 1990 to $4.84 in the spring of 1991). Quickservice restaurants recorded a 1.0 percent rise in the average eater check, from $2.91 in spring 1990 to $2.94 in spring 1991. The average check at upscale restaurants declined from spring 1990 levels, slipping 1.6 percent, from $9.64 to $9.49.

Breakfast checks advanced 1.9 percent from spring 1990 to spring 1991, growing from $2.57 to $2.62 per person. The average check at lunch also grew, but at a more modest rate, rising 1.1 percent (from $3.67 to $3.71). The average size of supper checks declined in the spring of 1991, down 0.6 percent to $5.07 from $5.10 in spring 1990.

—*Nancy Michalski*

Change in customer traffic by quarter* (spring 1989 to spring 1991)

Customer traffic advanced 0.6 percent in the spring quarter of 1991



*Percent change over same quarter, previous year

Source: NPD/CREST, *Quarterly Household Reports, 1989–1991*

CREST stands for Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, a diary survey of one of the NPD marketing and research companies.

Meal-consumption behavior in 1991

How often do people eat out? A new National Restaurant Association survey indicates that Americans consume 3.8 meals prepared in a commercial setting in an average week. In addition, the survey found that the average person eats 14.9 meals per week at home and skips 2.3 meals.

The typical person (eight years old or older) consumed an average of 3.8 meals per week away from home in 1991, down slightly from 3.9 meals in 1985, according to the latest consumer survey commissioned by the National Restaurant Association* to investigate meal-consumption behavior. In comparison, individuals on average consumed a lower 3.7 meals per week in a commercial setting in 1981.

In 1991 individuals consumed an average of 0.5 breakfasts and 1.2 dinners away from home per week in 1991, unchanged from 1985. However, in 1991 individuals consumed an average of 2.1 lunches away from home, down slightly from 2.2 in 1985.

Consequently, respondents in 1991 reported a slightly lower 3.8 meals prepared in a commercial setting compared with 1985.

Young adults consumed, on average, the highest number of lunches and dinners away from home in a week.

The decline between 1985 and 1991 in the average number of lunches consumed away from home is related in part to fielding the 1991 survey in a recessionary period. Consumers, lacking confidence in the economy, are more likely to rein in their purchases with lunch away from home a likely target. Other notable meal-consumption behavior trends over the 10-year period include:

□ Consumers skipped an average of 2.3 meals per week in in 1991, up from 2.2 meals in 1981 and 1985. Breakfast continued to be the meal most likely to be skipped over the 10-year period with an average of 1.6 breakfasts skipped per week, up from 1.4 in 1981.

□ The average number of dinners consumed away from home remained stable at 1.2 in 1981, 1985 and 1991.

□ Consumers ate an average of 14.9 meals at home in 1991 and 1985, down from 15.1 in 1981.

Lunch is the leading meal

Of the three daily meals, lunch was the meal most frequently consumed away from home in 1991. On average, individuals ate 2.1 commercially prepared lunchtime meals per week. This is higher than the 1.2 dinners and 0.5 breakfasts that, on average, were consumed away from home. By comparison, consumers ate 4.3 lunches, 4.9 breakfasts and 5.7 dinners prepared at either their home or at the home of a friend. In addition, consumers skipped breakfast, on the average, 1.6 times a week, lunch 0.6 times a week and dinner 0.1 times a week.

In addition to the number of meals on average eaten away from home, survey data also indicate the

Mean number of weekly meals consumed away from home, 1991

Respondent category	Number of meals per week
Sex	
Males	4.3
Females	3.6
Age	
Less than 13	5.0
13 to 17 years old	5.1
18 to 24 years old	5.1
25 to 34 years old	4.0
35 to 44 years old	3.9
45 to 54 years old	3.9
55 to 64 years old	3.2
65 years and older	2.4
Female employment	
Yes, employed	4.3
No, not employed	3.0
Microwave owner	
Yes	3.9
No	3.3
Children under 18	
Present in household	4.0
Not present in household	3.6
Total respondents	**3.8**

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Meal Consumption Behavior*, 1991

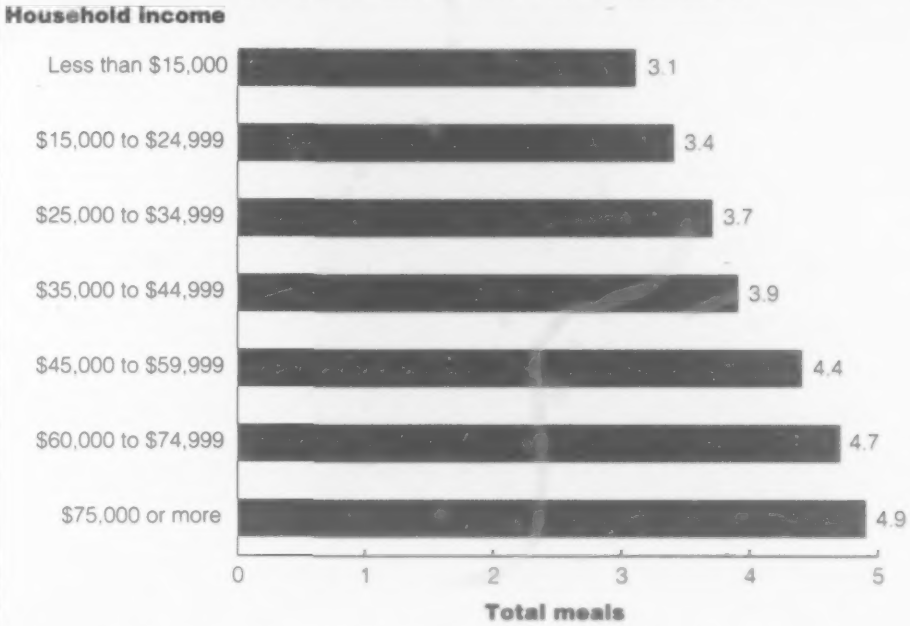
**In spring 1991, the National Restaurant Association commissioned HTI Research Inc., of the NPD Group, to survey individuals about where their meals were prepared and which meals, if any, were skipped during a seven-day period. In May 1991, survey cards were mailed to a participating panel consisting of 10,000 households. By June 7, 1991 (the official closing date), 7,120 households representing 15,408 individuals eight years old and older had returned the survey. Household members were asked to record information for the past seven days and for the five oldest household members (eight years old or older and living at home). Respondents recorded the number of meals prepared privately at home (or at a friend's home), prepared commercially (in a restaurant or school/work cafeteria) or skipped.*

incidence of eating out. Results indicate that 56.8 percent of consumers responded that they had eaten out for lunch at least once during the seven-day survey period. This is slightly higher than the proportion of those who went out for dinner in one week (53.5 percent) and much higher than the proportion who ate breakfast (20.7 percent) away from home at least once in the seven-day survey period.

Not only did a substantial proportion of consumers report eating lunch out at least once a week, but many did so more frequently. In 1991, 24.5 percent of consumers over age eight reported they ate a commercially prepared lunch between five and seven times a week. For breakfast and dinner, 4.4 percent and 4.9 percent, respectively, reported eating out five to seven times a week. Eating out for dinner was obviously a once or twice a week occasion for a large group of those surveyed, as 37.0 percent reported that they ate out for dinner once or twice during the seven-day period. This compares with 21.6 percent for lunch and 13.1 percent for breakfast.

Average weekly meals consumed away from home, by household income 1991

Individuals from higher-income households dine away from home more frequently than those from lower-income households do



Source: National Restaurant Association, *Meal Consumption Behavior*, 1991

1991 meal-period highlights

Breakfast

☐ More than one out of five (20.7 percent) of all individuals over eight years old consumed a commercially prepared breakfast at least once during a week.

☐ On the average, individuals consumed 0.5 breakfasts away from home in a week.

☐ The average individual skipped 1.6 breakfasts in one week, making breakfast the most frequently skipped meal.

Lunch

☐ Almost six out of ten (56.8 percent) individuals ate lunch prepared away from home at least once a week. This makes lunch the meal most frequently consumed away from home.

☐ Individuals consumed, on the average, 2.1 lunches away from home per week.

☐ The average individual skipped lunch 0.6 times in a week.

Dinner

☐ Among individuals over age eight, 53.5 percent consumed at least one commercially prepared dinner in a seven-day period.

☐ The average individual consumed 1.2 dinners away from home in a week.

☐ Individuals skipped, on average, only 0.1 dinners in a one-week period.

Men eat out more often

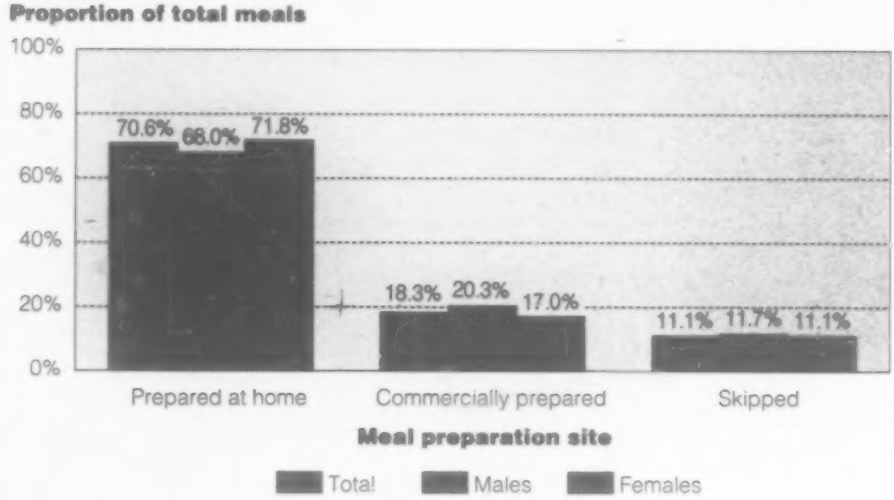
Men ate out more than women for all meals in 1991. On the average, men ate 0.6 breakfasts, 2.3 lunches and 1.3 dinners away from home, while women ate 0.5 breakfasts, 1.9 lunches and 1.2 dinners away from home during a seven-day period. On the average, 20.3 percent of meals consumed by males were commercially prepared, compared with a lower 17.0 percent for women. Men and women skipped virtually the same number of meals during a seven-day period—2.5 for men and 2.3 for women. Women ate more meals prepared at home or at a friend's home—15.1 versus 14.3 for men.

Somewhat more males than females dined out during an average week for all meal periods in 1991. An examination of the proportion of those reporting eating out at least once a week indicates that 59.9 percent of men reported eating lunch away from home at least once a week, compared with 56.3 percent of women. In addition, 55.3 percent of men reported eating at least one dinner away from home, compared with 53.4 percent of women. Meanwhile, 23.1 percent of men reported eating breakfast away from home at least once in a week, compared with 19.4 percent of women. This pattern of consumption held true among men and women of similar age groups, with men always recording a greater likelihood of eating meals prepared away from home.

A higher proportion of men than women also reported eating out with high frequency. A larger proportion of men reported eating

Breakdown of weekly meal consumption, by preparation site and gender, 1991

Females reported a lower incidence of eating out than males



Source: National Restaurant Association, *Meal Consumption Behavior*, 1991

Proportion who reported eating at home, at restaurants and skipping meals in the past seven days (1991)

Meal occasion	Privately prepared	Commercially prepared	Skipped
Breakfast			
At least once	84.4%	20.7%	33.4%
1 to 2 times	11.0	13.1	7.5
3 to 4 times	7.6	3.2	6.2
5 to 7 times	65.8	4.4	19.7
None	15.6	79.3	66.6
Lunch			
At least once	85.8%	56.8%	19.2%
1 to 2 times	19.2	21.6	10.0
3 to 4 times	12.0	10.6	3.9
5 to 7 times	54.6	24.5	5.4
None	14.2	43.2	80.8
Dinner			
At least once	97.4%	53.5%	6.3%
1 to 2 times	4.1	37.0	4.5
3 to 4 times	12.6	11.6	1.0
5 to 7 times	80.7	4.9	0.8
None	2.6	46.5	93.7

Note: *Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.*
Source: National Restaurant Association, *Meal Consumption Behavior*, 1991

out between five and seven times a week for all three meals. For example, 29.1 percent of men reported eating a commercially prepared lunch between five and seven times a week, compared with 21.2 percent of women. Similarly, 5.5 percent of men reported eating breakfast and 5.8 percent reported eating dinner away from home between five and seven times a week, compared with 3.5 percent and 4.0 percent, respectively, for women.

Dining out declines with age, increases with income

When age and household income are considered in dining-out frequency, some notable patterns emerge. The average number of meals eaten away from home in a week decreases after age 24 and increases with household income.

People between 8 and 24 years old consumed an average of 5 meals away from home in a week. Much of the consumption for those between 8 and 12 and those between 13 and 17 is at lunch, when they consumed an average of 3.6 and 3.7 lunches, respectively, away from home—probably in school cafeterias. For young adults between 18 and 24, consumption patterns changed slightly from those of the pre-teen and teenage set, as this group consumed 2.6 lunches and 1.7 dinners away from home. Young adults consumed, on aver-

To order the report

For those interested in additional information about individual meal-consumption behavior, a detailed report that examines the eating patterns of various demographic segments of the population is available. *Meal Consumption Behavior* (publication CS100) presents an in-depth analysis of meal-consumption behavior by age, sex, household income and other demographic factors.

The report is available to association members for $25 and to nonmembers for $50. This includes shipping and handling charges. (Overseas orders require a 20 percent surcharge.) All orders must be prepaid.

You may order by sending a check or money order to the National Restaurant Association Publications Department, 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington DC 20036-3097. For credit-card orders, call the association's Information Service and Library at (202) 331-5960 or (800) 424-5156 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Eastern time.

age, the highest number of lunches and dinners away from home in a week.

Average weekly consumption of both lunch and dinner away from home drops after age 24 and, for the most part, continues to decline with age. Adults between 25 and 34 years old, for example, consumed a lower 2.1 lunches and 1.3 dinners away from home in a week. Among the oldest age group, adults 65 years old and older, an average of 1.0 lunches and dinners were consumed away from home in a week.

Household income also plays a significant role in away-from-home meal consumption. Individuals in households in the lowest income category (those with annual income below $15,000 a year) consumed an average of 3.1 meals away from home in a week—0.6 breakfasts, 1.7 lunches and 0.8 dinners. Individuals living in households in the highest income category ($75,000 a year and more) consumed the largest number of meals (4.9) away from home—0.7 breakfasts, 2.6 lunches and 1.7 dinners.

While the average number of breakfasts eaten away from home is relatively steady among all income categories, away-from-home consumption of both lunch and dinner increases with income. This is not surprising, since these later meals tend to have higher check averages than breakfast; therefore households with higher incomes might better be able to afford them on a more frequent basis. Households with lower incomes might consider dining out for lunch and dinner more of a luxury.

—Nancy Michalski

New industry operations report released

The National Restaurant Association's Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1991 *offers restaurateurs a chance to compare their operations with those of a similar profile. The new study, which was conducted jointly by the association and the national accounting firm of Deloitte & Touche, is based on 1990 information collected from 1,270 restaurant operators.*

An abundance of financial and operating information is contained in the National Restaurant Association's *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1991*. The study contains specific information for each of the following types of restaurants:

- full-menu tableservice
- limited-menu tableservice
- limited-menu, no tableservice (fast food) and
- cafeterias.

Operating results are expressed as amounts per seat and as ratios of total sales—the most common bases used in the industry. The study details such information as sales (by food and beverage), cost of sales, gross profit, controllable expenses, occupancy costs, restaurant profit and pretax income.

Also provided are seat turnover rates, average check size, cost per dollar of sales, and analysis of employment. (Analysis of employment includes employees per seat, sales per employee, and the number of part-time versus full-time workers.) These data are reported by operational characteristics such as affiliation, menu theme and sales volume. The report includes amount-per-square-foot data covering sales and profits, as well as occupancy and utility expenses.

Thanks . . .

. . . to the association members who supplied data to make this report possible. Your cooperation is appreciated, and a complimentary copy of the report is on its way to you.

New utility data

This year's *Restaurant Industry Operations Report* contains a variety of new information on restaurant utility expenses. For the first time, a detailed breakdown of utility costs (including electricity, gas, water and waste-removal expenses) is presented on an amount-per-seat basis and a per-square-foot basis for the four restaurant categories.

Survey results indicate that electricity costs accounted for the majority of utility costs at restaurants in 1990. For example, among full-menu tableservice survey respondents, median utility costs in 1990 were $186 per seat, or 3.2 percent as a ratio of total sales. Median electricity costs for respondents providing detailed utility data were $112

Median check per person for full-menu tableservice operations

Sales volume category	
Less than $500,000	$ 8.40
$500,000 to $999,999	9.50
$1,000,000 to $1,999,999	10.75
$2,000,000 or more	14.57
All restaurants	**$10.00**

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1991*

Median utility costs per seat for full-menu tableservice operations 1990

Electricity expenses represent the majority of utility costs

Electricity	$112
Gas	43
Water	16
Waste removal	14
Other	13
Total utility costs	**$186**

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1991*

per seat, the highest of the utility costs covered by the survey. Median gas costs were a lower $43 per seat.

An examination of utility costs at full-menu tableservice operations indicates these establishments posted a total utility cost of $6.16 per square foot in 1990. Median electrical costs were $3.56 per square foot, and median gas costs were $1.38 per square foot.

Limited-menu, no tableservice (fast food) operators posted the highest total utility costs among the four restaurant categories on a per-seat and square-foot basis: $239 per seat, or $7.67 per square foot. Median electricity and gas costs were $167 and $45 per seat, respectively.

The restaurant industry dollar, 1990

	Full-menu tableservice	Limited-menu tableservice	Limited-menu, no tableservice	Cafeteria
Where it came from				
Food sales	76.3	83.3	97.6	90.7
Beverage sales	20.2	15.8	2.0	3.2
Other income	3.5	0.9	0.4	6.1
Where it went				
Cost of food sold	27.3	27.6	33.1	31.1
Cost of beverage sold	5.4	3.9	0.5	0.9
Payroll	28.8	26.6	23.9	29.7
Employee benefits	4.3	3.6	2.5	2.6
Direct operating expenses	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.2
Music and entertainment	0.7	0.3	0.1	0.1
Advertising and promotion	2.4	3.5	5.7	2.0
Utilities	2.8	2.8	3.6	2.8
Administrative and general	4.1	3.0	2.4	3.2
Repairs and maintenance	2.1	1.9	2.1	1.5
Rent	4.2	6.6	5.6	4.4
Property taxes	0.7	0.6	0.3	0.4
Other taxes	0.6	0.4	0.8	0.2
Property insurance	1.0	0.8	1.1	0.7
Interest	1.2	0.6	0.6	0.5
Depreciation	2.3	2.1	3.0	3.7
Other deductions	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.2
Corporate overhead	1.7	3.0	0.9	4.4
Net income before income taxes	3.9	6.1	7.5	5.4

Note: *All figures were weighted averages.*
Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1991*

Waste removal costs

For the first time the *Restaurant Industry Operations Report* contains data on the costs of waste removal. Expenses captured under waste removal include the cost of garbage, rubbish-waste-matter disposal and incinerator expenses. These waste-removal services are often provided under contract to the restaurant.

Analysis of operations survey data reveals that fast food restaurants experienced the highest waste-removal expenses on both a per-seat and square-footage basis. Fast food survey respondents reported a median waste-removal expenditure in 1990 of $16 per seat, or $0.51 per square foot. In comparison, full-menu tableservice operators posted a somewhat lower median waste-removal expense of $14 per seat, or $0.48 per square foot.

The report provides additional data on waste-removal expenses by parameters such as restaurant location, sales volume and type of establishment.

Other highlights

□ **Full-menu tableservice.** In 1990 the median check per person for full-menu tableservice restaurants was $10.00—considerably higher than for other types of establishments covered in this study. This reflects the higher-priced menus at these establishments and the fact that many full-menu tableservice restaurants serve alcoholic beverages.

Median food sales were $4,418 per seat. Alcoholic beverage sales accounted for $1,177 per seat. Average daily seat turnover was 1.3.

□ **Limited-menu tableservice.** The median check among limited-menu tableservice respondents was $6.59 in 1990, with an average daily seat turnover of 1.7. Median food sales were $3,995 per seat, and alcoholic-beverage sales represented $596 per seat. Median sales per full-time-equivalent employee were $31,108.

□ **Limited-menu, no tableservice.** Limited-menu, no tableservice (fast food) survey participants reported an average daily seat turnover of 3.7 in 1990—the highest among the four restaurant categories covered by the study. Median food sales were $6,305. Median annual sales per full-time-equivalent employee in 1990 were $33,184.

—Hudson Riehle

How to order the report

A copy of the *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1991* (publication CS951) is available to association members for $39 and to nonmembers for $72. This includes shipping and handling charges. (Overseas orders require a 20 percent surcharge.) All orders must be prepaid.

You may order by sending a check or money order to the National Restaurant Association Publications Department, 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. For credit-card orders, call the association's Information Service and Library between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Eastern time) at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960.

Foodservice Market Measure

July 1991

After easing in June, foodservice patronage picked up again in July, as 52 percent of adults reported they were foodservice patrons on a typical day, according to the Foodservice Market Measure. Moreover, patronage was significantly higher than last year's 45 percent level for July, which has been pinpointed as the initial month of the recession.

Despite the fact that total employment declined by nearly 2 percent between July 1990 and July 1991, the proportion of adults who were lunch patrons on a typical day posted a significant gain, from 22 percent to 27 percent. The proportions of adults who were dinner and breakfast patrons on a typical day this July were identical to a year earlier.

Although the proportion of adults who were on-premises customers showed little change in July 1991 versus July 1990, there was a significant gain in patronage for takeout or delivered meals. Boosted by a gain in lunch, off-premises patronage on a typical day reached 23 percent in July 1991, up from 19 percent a year earlier.

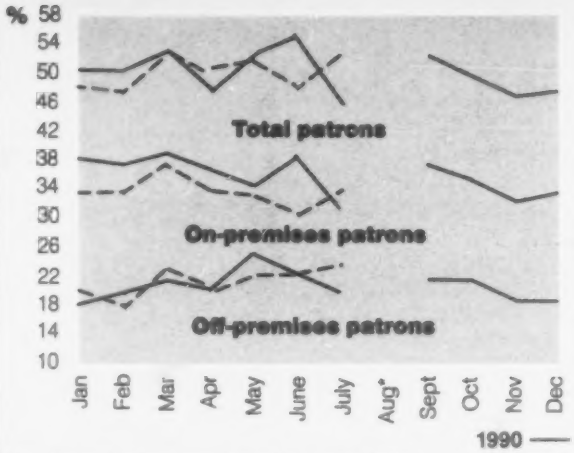
Another indication of improvement this July is that 11 percent of adults reported that they were foodservice patrons for more than one meal a day, up significantly from just 6 percent a year ago.

Will patronage continue to maintain the improvement seen in July? It is encouraging that the strength in patronage was evident for consumers with incomes below $20,000, and among those in the $20,000 to $40,000 category—as well as among those with higher incomes. Nevertheless, concern among consumers regarding employment conditions continues to hold down consumer confidence, which actually declined in July.

The July increase in foodservice patronage appears to be a regional one, with consumers in the South and the Midwest reporting gains, while consumers in the East and West showed no increase in patronage.

—Susan Mills

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons



*No Market Measure was fielded in August 1990.

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day

	Jan.–June 1991	July 1990	July 1991	Percentage point change
Male	52%	47%	55%	+8
Female	47	43	49	+6
White	48	45	53	+8
Nonwhite	54	46	47	+1
Age				
18 to 24 years old	62	63	59	−4
25 to 34 years old	54	47	55	+8
35 to 44 years old	51	43	60	+17
45 to 54 years old	49	57	50	−7
55 to 64 years old	42	30	47	+17
65 and older	34	31	37	+6
Income				
$40,000 or more	56	54	54	—
$20,000 to $39,999	47	44	54	+10
Less than $20,000	44	39	53	+14
Region				
East	48	48	49	+1
Midwest	49	41	57	+16
South	50	43	54	+11
West	50	49	46	−3

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day

	Jan.–June 1991	July 1990	July 1991
On premise	33%	31%	33%
Off premise	21	19	23
Meal period			
Breakfast	6	6	6
Lunch	25	22	27
Dinner	24	23	23

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Foodservice Market Measure

The Foodservice Market Measure is based on 1,000 telephone interviews, conducted by the Gallup Organization each month, with a nationally representative sample of adults age 18 and older. Each person is asked the same questions:

1. Which of the following did you do yesterday?

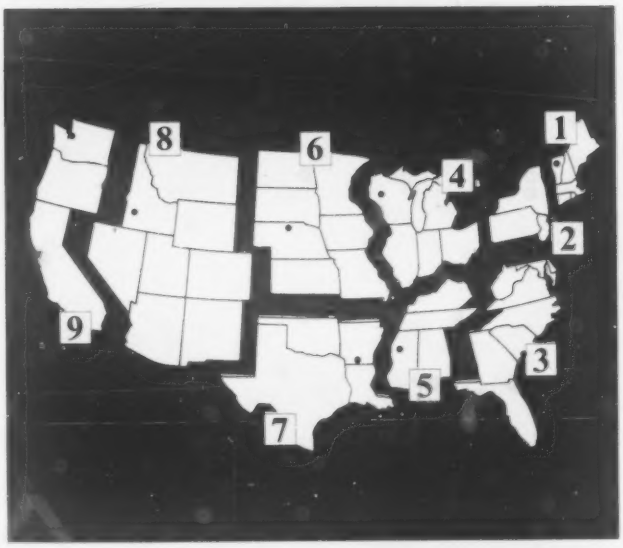
☐ Ate on the premises of a restaurant, fast food place, cafeteria or any other place where you purchased a meal or snack.

☐ Purchased takeout food "to go" or had it delivered.

2. Was the food you ate on premises yesterday for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

3. Was the takeout food you purchased or had delivered for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

The monthly tracking of purchases is supplemented by quarterly inquiries on topics of industry interest.



1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: Stowe, VT
Association member: Peter Bartholomew
Operation: Stowehof Inn
Profile: Upscale resort restaurant
In business: 42 years
Seats: 100
Meals served: Breakfast, dinner; weekend lunch

Business at the Stowehof Inn seems to be climbing out of a deep valley that hit bottom in 1990. The restaurant, called the Season's Dining Room, is part of the Stowehof resort hotel in the Green Mountains of Vermont.

Hotel business remains down over last year, but the restaurant is busier than it was a year ago, according to general manager **David Carter.** Well over 90 percent of the restaurant's business comes from hotel guests and other tourists.

The biggest crowds come during the winter skiing season and the changing of the colors in the fall. Stowe's year-round population is only 3,500, with most of those people working in the tourism industry.

The Stowehof's upscale menu of seafood, salmon, veal and other entrees changes at least twice each week to give hotel guests a variety of menu choices.

2 MID-ATLANTIC

Location: Amagansett, NY
Association members: Andrea and Fred Terry, Paul De Angelis
Operation: Lobster Roll Restaurant
Profile: Casual seafood restaurant
In business: 26 years
Seats: 150
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Keeping up with a changing customer base has helped the Lobster Roll Restaurant remain successful on eastern Long Island. Because many families now inhabit the Hamptons resort area, the restaurant has incorporated a children's menu and worked harder on service.

"Kids can get a peanut butter and jelly sandwich off the kids' menu, and their parents can have a $13.95 swordfish dinner," explains co-owner **Andrea Terry.** "People like it because they can take their kids out and not get hit with a big plate charge.

"People are much more conscious of service these days," adds Terry. "If the food is mediocre and the service is excellent, the customer will come back. But if the service is poor, they won't give you a second chance."

The high-volume seafood restaurant got its name from its signature item—a toasted bun topped with lobster salad. But many regulars simply refer to the restaurant as "Lunch's" because of the large, 25-year-old "Lunch" sign on the roof. The Terrys have capitalized on this by placing the "Lunch" logo in all advertising.

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Mt. Pleasant, SC
Association member: Joel Plotkin
Operation: Fonduely Yours
Profile: Casual fondue
In business: 6 months
Seats: 120
Meal served: Dinner

The owners of the recently opened Fonduely Yours hope that their innovative concept will be a big hit among local residents, rather than just tourists. So far, they've met with success, says manager **Pat Latta.**

The restaurant, located about three miles from the ocean, serves food strictly fondue style. Chicken, seafood and beef are popular items to dip in the four sauces—horseradish, barbecue, honey mustard and sweet-and-sour. Latta says the only other fondue restaurant in South Carolina is nearly two hours away. The dining area is partitioned off to provide a more private meal.

"The first time they come here is for the novelty. After that, they come back for the great staff and the food," says Latta. He notes that many customers enjoy the nostalgia of eating fondue. "A lot of people think of fondue as an old fad that has died out, but we feel it's making a comeback," says Latta.

4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Chippewa Falls, WI
Association member: Thomas Cooper
Operation: Water's Edge Supper Club
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 10 months
Seats: 250
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

With the area economy hurting from a double dose of bad luck, the inaugural year for the Water's Edge Supper Club has been a rocky one. The many dairy farmers in the area have seen their prices drop, and a large nearby factory is closing its doors.

"You can definitely see things are slower now," explains owner **Thomas Cooper.** "People are much more price conscious."

To attract those budget-minded customers, the restaurant has introduced several daily specials and combination dinners, such as prime rib and crab legs, for a lower price. For lunch, the restaurant now offers soup and sandwich specials.

Since taking over the Water's Edge in 1990, Cooper has tried to brighten the furnishings. He has also expanded the menu and created a more upscale atmosphere.

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Greenwood, MS
Assocation member: Travis Clark
Operation: L & L Catfish and Steak House
Profile: Family restaurant

In business: 1 year
Seats: 86
Meal served: Dinner

Opening a new catfish restaurant in the heart of America's catfish-growing region was a gamble for **Travis Clark.** But so far, the gamble has paid off.

"Our business has gradually increased ever since we moved in here last year," says Clark, who may soon open the restaurant for lunch.

According to Clark, 83 percent of his business comes from the popular all-you-can-eat catfish buffet. For $5.95, customers can choose from fried catfish, corn on the cob, french fries, hush puppies and other items.

A couple of months after opening in August 1990, Clark added broiled catfish to his menu because of customer requests. "In the future I think the broiled catfish will be a really strong item. I see more interest in it now, and people are more health conscious," says Clark.

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Bassett, NE
Association members: Richard and Genevieve Lackaff
Operation: Bassett Lodge and Range Cafe
Profile: Family restaurant
In business: 41 years
Seats: 65
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Business is slowly improving at the Bassett Lodge and Range Cafe, mostly because cattle prices are creeping back up again. It may seem ironic that owners of a beef-specialty restaurant would hope for higher beef prices. But to the economy of this tiny north central Nebraska town of 950 people, ranching is king.

"We would rather see the economy improve than worry about the cost of our product," says owner **Richard Lackaff,** who is a rancher himself. "It doesn't do us any good if the customer can't afford to buy a meal."

Since 1950, the Lackaff family has tended to cattle and run the 30-room hotel and adjoining cafe. The population of Bassett, and thus the amount of restaurant business, declined throughout the 1980s as the economy slowed.

The cafe, which competes with one other eatery in town, features homestyle cooking at a popular Sunday buffet and daily noon specials. A mural of a cattle drive covers one wall, while antiques and other furnishings add to the Old West flavor. Staffing is a constant concern at the cafe. According to assistant manager **Sue Larson,** "There's not a long line of people looking for work right now. I guess that's a good thing and also a bad thing."

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Smackover, AR
Association member: Lee Williams
Operation: Oil Town Restaurant
Profile: Family restaurant
In business: 1½ years
Seats: 42
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch

The second summer at the Oil Town Restaurant was surprisingly busy, in part because hamburgers and a kids' special were added to the menu. "Usually it's slow when school is out and vacations are going on, but we were delighted this summer," says owner **Lee Williams.** "I expected the same amount of business I had last summer, but I was pleasantly surprised."

The restaurant, which features health items such as a salad bar and baked potato bar, has introduced a hamburger to the menu this year by popular demand. In addition, a children's summer special of a hot dog and a soda for 99 cents was well received.

On the walls of the restaurant, rustic pictures tell the story of this Southern oil town. The economy of the area fluctuates with the price of oil and is currently slumping.

Oil Town competes with one other restaurant in the south central Arkansas town of 2,000 people. Williams sees an advantage in the fact that her restaurant is located next to the only traffic light in Smackover.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Boise, ID
Association member: Lee Rivas
Operation: Heartbreak Cafe
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 6 years
Seats: 270
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

A well-established clientele and business from nearby Boise State University keep a steady flow of business coming into the Heartbreak Cafe. August, as expected, was a slow month because of vacation time and the absence of college students.

The restaurant uses drink specials, promotion nights and daily entree specials to attract new customers. "Our menu is always changing. The base of the menu is always the same, but we have seven or eight items we prepare each night as specials," explains manager **Jay Lyon.**

Heartbreak Cafe attracts a variety of customers by creating two separate atmospheres in one restaurant. The elegant main dining room features white tablecloths and pillars in an art deco style. Brick walls, a casual setting and a menu of lower-priced items are found in the bar area.

9 PACIFIC

Location: Maple Valley, WA
Association member: Jennie Brown
Operation: Caruso's Wilderness Inn
Profile: Family restaurant
In business: 14 years
Seats: 60
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

"We were in a slump during the winter, like most restaurants," explains **Nancy Braase** of Caruso's Wilderness Inn. "But we're pulling out of it now."

Business at Caruso's, located 30 miles east of Seattle on the highway to Mount Rainier, has also been hurt by the depressed logging industry in the Northwest. But the family restaurant remains successful because of a loyal pack of regulars and hungry tourists on their way to the mountain. In fact, Braase estimates that 35 to 40 percent of the customers are tourists.

The small family eatery serves all three meals, with each including lower-priced special items and seniors' discounts. Seafood and steaks are two signature items for the roadside restaurant.

—Pat DiDomenico

The sword in the sandwich?

One Illinois eating place has turned to a very old way to entertain its customers in a daring and different manner: It offers jousting and sword fights as mealtime entertainment.

Medieval Times Dinner and Tournament Inc. recently launched an adventure in nightly dining that truly is an adventure of the knightly sort. The 84,500-square-foot dinner and tournament complex is modeled after an 11th-century Spanish castle, complete with turrets, towers and a drawbridge.

The restaurant's indoor arena hosts knights on horseback competing in tournament games, sword fights and jousting matches, while a battalion of patrons—1,400 strong—feasts on a hearty, medieval-style banquet.

—DeFrancesco Goodfriend Public Relations

Words for the wines

Is that perfect word to describe your sparkling wine caught on the tip of your tongue? Now you no longer need grope for grape descriptions. All it takes is a spin of the wheel.

The Sparkling Wine Aroma Wheel, invented by winemaker Patricia Howe and enology professor Ann Noble, helps operators, chefs and sommeliers find scintillating descriptions to perk up wine merchandising and appreciation. The inventors, believing that few people ever get past hackneyed phrases such as "toasty," "fruity" and "yeasty," developed a wheel that breaks down general wine adjectives into more specific and concrete sensual descriptions. "Fruity," for instance, can be reduced to "citrus," "berry," "melon" and other terms. These terms can then be broken down even further into individual fruit decriptions.

The Aroma Wheel contains a variety of terms large enough that no sparkling wine connoisseur will ever be at a loss for words.

—Food Arts

The benefits of benefits

Some employers assume that fair salaries will draw loyal employees, but according to a recent Gallup survey commissioned by the Employee Benefit Research Institute in Washington DC, salaries alone do not make jobs attractive—benefits count, too.

Eighty-four percent of the 1,000 people surveyed ranked benefits as an important issue in choosing a job, and 52 percent of respondents said that when choosing between jobs they would require a median of $10,000 more per year to make up for the lack of benefits in a job offer. Sixty-four percent of those surveyed said they would turn down a position without benefits, and 43 percent reported that they would look elsewhere if a job offered no pension plan.

—Entrepreneur

A doughnut development

Not since the advent of dunking has a development excited the doughnut industry as much as Warren Foster's new "almost-finished doughnut."

Foster, the CEO of the Foster's Family Donuts chain in Simi Valley, California, has taken doughnut-making one step further by devising a partially made doughnut that can sit at room temperature—shrink-wrapped and sterile—for up to 10 days. Operators can complete the cooking process of frying and glazing in about 3 minutes, enabling customers to savor hot doughnuts throughout the day without a long wait.

—Fortune

Snack food snafu

To help ease its hefty deficit, the state of California has authorized a new tax on snack foods. But "snack" seems difficult to define, even for the state legislature.

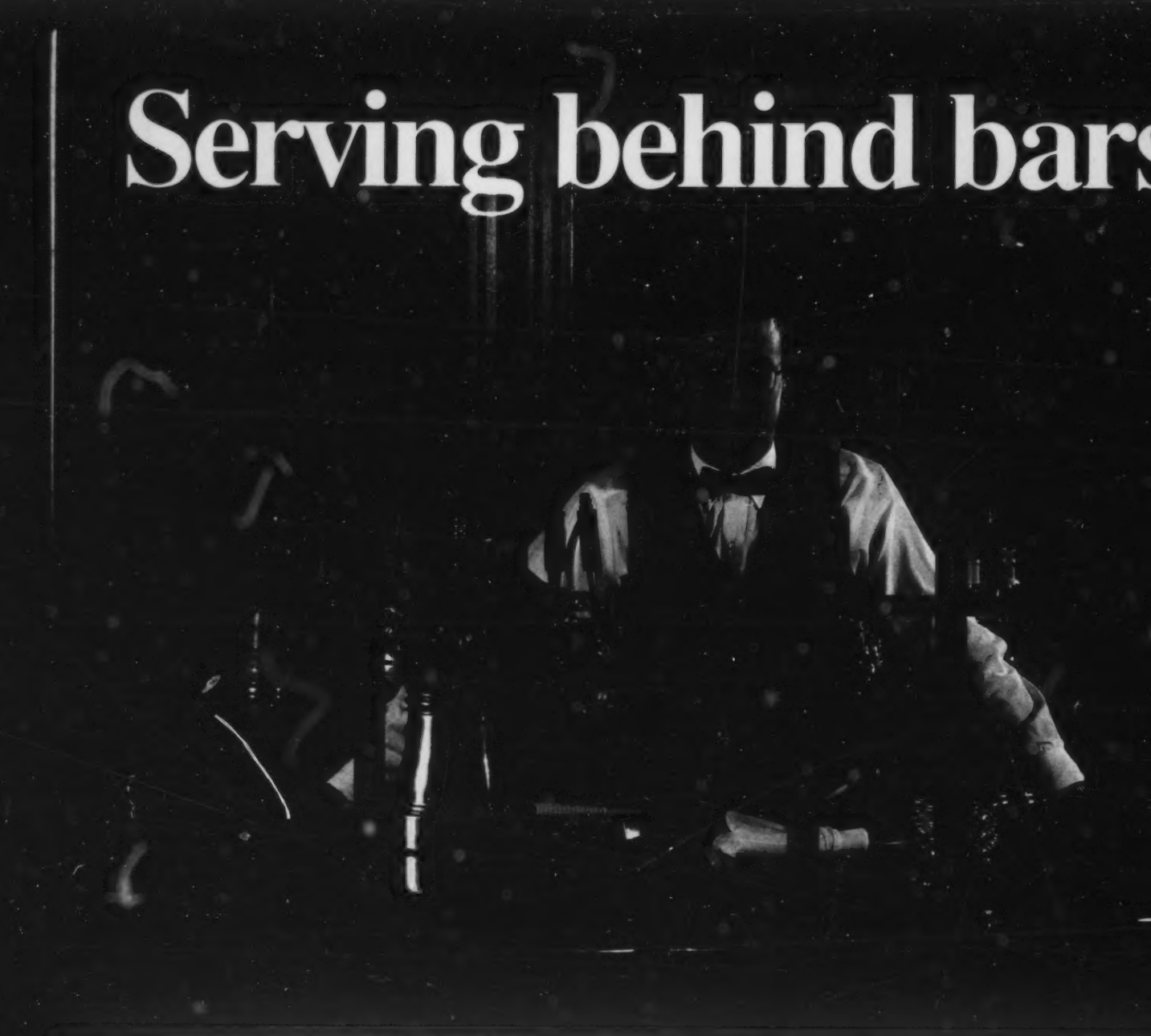
Taxability can depend on form. A bag of chocolate chips is tax free, but chips in cookies will cost you more. Peanuts are not taxed unless they're in a box of Cracker Jack.

For other "snack" items, it's a question of usage. Glazed fruit, for example, is taxed when sold as snacking candy but not when it's a baking ingredient to make future snacks.

For most snack-like foods, however, taxability seems largely a matter of arbitrary interpretation. A brownie, according to the legislature, is taxed as a "snack cake." Meanwhile, a bread, pastry or bakery item—such as a muffin or a doughnut—is tax free. And a bag of greasy, salty pork rinds escapes taxation for its special merits—it's a meat derivative.

—Wall Street Journal

Serving behind bars



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You Have A Lot To Lose

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THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

VOL. 11 NO. 9 OCTOBE

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RESTAURANTS USA

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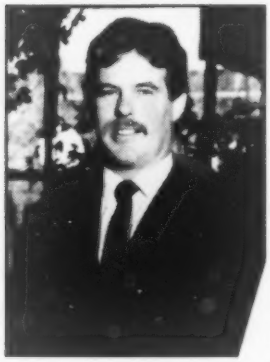
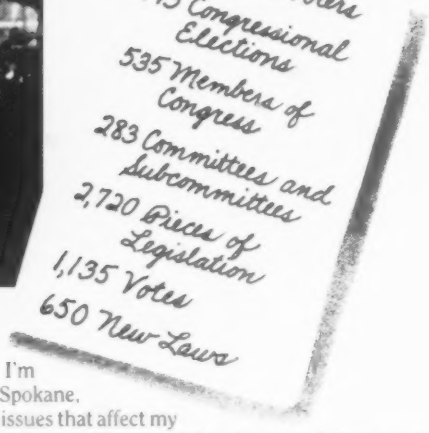
"I belong to NRA-PAC because there's only one of me and..."





My name is John McKinney. I'm a restaurant operator in Spokane, Washington. I care about a lot of issues that affect my industry, my job and my family — issues like teen labor laws, social security taxes on tips, parental and medical leave, and food safety. Congress addresses these issues every day and I want lawmakers to understand my concerns. But as just one voter, I can't be sure my views are seriously considered.

That's why I contribute to the National Restaurant Association Political Action Committee (NRA-PAC). Together with other foodservice operators, I strengthen my voice in the political process. NRA-PAC keeps me informed about the issues that have an impact on me and lets me know where the candidates stand on these issues. I join with others who care about promoting free enterprise and a strong economy. We combine our resources to support candidates who share our concerns and will fight for us in Congress. Our views get heard.

As an operator of one of the nation's 650,000 foodservice establishments, I'm proud to belong to NRA-PAC. It's the best way I know to affect the issues that affect me.

Political Action Committees: My Choice for a Stronger Voice

For more information, call NRA-PAC at (800) 424-5156.

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Management Information Systems
10/15–18 Atlanta, GA

Marketing Executives
10/16–19 San Diego, CA

Foodservice Purchasing Managers
10/23–24 Denver, CO

Quality Assurance
10/23–25 St. Louis, MO

Multiunit Environmental Affairs Officers
11/6–8 San Diego, CA

For more information on specific study groups, contact Rosemary Curtis at (312) 853-2525.

SEMINARS

Service That Sells
10/21 (half-day program)
10/22 (half-day program)

Tips & Tools for Training
10/29 (half-day program)

Current Legal Issues
11/18 (full-day program)

SERVSAFE Responsible Alcohol Service
11/19 (full-day program)

Note: Unless otherwise indicated, all seminars are held in the Educational Foundation's conference center at 250 South Wacker Drive in Chicago.

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RESTAURANTS USA

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Executive Editor Jeffrey R. Prince
Editor Paul Moomaw
Managing Editor Melanie A. Crosby
Staff Contributors
Jennifer Batty, Pat DiDomenico, Elizabeth Gordon, Andrew McLauchlin, Nancy Michalski, Susan Mills, B. Hudson Riehle, Denise Roach, Wendy Webster, Diane Welland

Art Direction
Magazine: Tom Bellucci
Covers: Richard Earle, Liz Dalgetty

Administrative Assistant Susan Kessler
Editorial Secretary Ronda Bowers
Intern Courtney Chamberlain

Editorial office and association headquarters 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW Washington DC 20036-3097 (202) 331-5900
Chicago office 150 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2000 Chicago, IL 60601 (312) 853-2525
Educational Foundation 250 S. Wacker Dr. Suite 1400 Chicago, IL 60606 (312) 715-1010

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

John R. Farquharson, president
ARASERVE, Philadelphia, PA

Restaurateurs take their case to Congress

Restaurateurs all across the country have returned to their businesses feeling energized about our industry after spending a successful three days at the National Restaurant Association's 1991 Public Affairs Conference. This year the theme was "Take Your Case to Congress," and we certainly lived up to that motto.

A record number of states, 47, were represented at this annual event, held September 23–25 in Washington DC. Nearly 430 restaurant operators learned what makes Washington tick and how to become a vocal partner in the legislative process.

In addition, restaurateurs held more than 340 face-to-face meetings with members of Congress, the most contacts we've ever made in the seven-year history of the Public Affairs Conference. The meetings were the cornerstone of the event, giving us the opportunity to offer individual representatives and senators the restaurateur's view of issues such as FICA taxes, mandated health and family-leave benefits, teen-employment rules, minimum wage and OSHA regulations.

Our efforts on the first day of the conference led to an unexpected victory on the teen-labor front. Restaurateurs helped to convince Rep. Charles Schumer (D–NY) to drop his proposal to make certain child-labor violations subject to criminal penalties, including jail terms. The situation remains volatile, however, and a similar proposal could surface again.

The opening night included the always-elegant *Chef d'oeuvre* congressional reception on Capitol Hill. Members of Congress and conference participants chatted informally while sampling fare from some of Washington's elite restaurants. It was a great chance to meet informally with the men and women who have such an important hand in our businesses.

More progress on FICA repeal

Among the foodservice-related news from Capitol Hill last month were developments on the timely issue of FICA-tax repeal.

So far, 198 members of the House and 33 members of the Senate have agreed to sponsor the repeal legislation. Much of the credit for the increase in cosponsors can be given to association members who pushed FICA repeal during district meetings in August.

September board meeting

At the association's board meeting that preceded the Public Affairs Conference, directors decided to produce a tabloid newspaper that would be mailed to guidance counselors in the 17,500 public high schools

across the nation. The newspaper would be filled with stories about the growth of the foodservice industry and the job opportunities it provides. The paper would also include features on successful restaurateurs and innovative educational programs.

Too many people who advise students on careers know little or nothing about the foodservice career ladder, new degree programs and scholarships that make foodservice a great field for students. This newspaper will carry a positive message about our industry to guidance counselors in every state.

Challenge fund meets goal

This month, the Educational Foundation announced that the Challenge Fund endowment campaign met its first-year goal by raising more than $2.5 million. Foundation president Dan Gescheidle attributes the success to the tremendous support of association and foundation board members. The challenge, though, is just beginning.

The Challenge Fund is now entering its second phase, which is to gain commitments outside of the board families. Continued support will be needed to reach the Foundation's three-year goal of increasing the endowment to $10 million. Contributions fund the development of new educational programs and increase scholarship opportunities for hospitality students.

Large Independent Operators Group seeks members

Earlier this month, members of the association's Large Independent Operators (LIO) Group met in Philadelphia. The group heard presentations on the critical role of family-owned businesses in the economy and the importance of marketing the menu. Members of the group own restaurants that generate about $1 million per unit annually. For information on joining this group, contact Rosemary Curtis in the Chicago office at (312) 853-2525.

I'd like to welcome the 64 new members who joined the association during the past month. Your participation in the association's programs and your interest in our activities will help to improve both your restaurant and the association.

Sincerely,

John Farquharson

John R. Farquharson
President and Chairman of the Board

COVER STORY

TURNING TABLES WHEN THE RUSH IS ON

15 Serving customers efficiently in a busy restaurant is one of a restaurateur's most pleasant challenges. There's nothing like a calm, calculated system to handle a frantic rush with ease. Read how one Manhattan restaurant turns tables speedily.

SPECIALS

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Restaurateurs are unanimous in their fight to repeal this tax that is damaging the bottom line.

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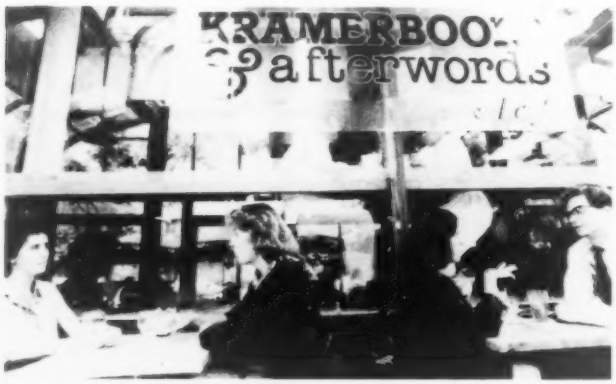
These successful cafe operators encourage their customers to read at the table.

33 Conducting meetings
Take a moment to meet with this foodservice consultant's ideas on orchestrating productive business meetings.

20 Do you have a cost of sales problem?
An industry expert walks managers through the steps of solving the cost-of-sales puzzle.

24 Savor the squash
Squash is squeezing its way back into favor, adding flavor and variety to menus year-round.

26 Afternoon tea
Some restaurant operators are brewing up business during downtime by heating up the ritual of afternoon tea.



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Front and back cover photos by Gary Landsman.

Lake Charles chefs cook up a "Show for Life"

The sights, sounds and tastes of New Orleans moved west about 200 miles on September 14, when chefs and musicians gathered in Lake Charles, Louisiana, to put on the 15th annual "Show for Life" benefit for the American Cancer Society.

A mixture of jazz, Cajun and rhythm-and-blues music spiced up an evening already well-seasoned by the culinary efforts of Louisiana chefs who cooked for a good cause: research that can lead to the cure and prevention of cancer.

Tastes of Louisiana were furnished by participating chefs from the City Club, the Pioneer Club, Cafe Margaux, Chateau Nouveau, Chateau Charles, the Boarding House, Lake Charles Country Club and Sowela Technical Institute.

Puckett's Photography

Cashiers (and crooks) take note

Restaurateurs and other retailers who conduct business with big bills may have an easier time identifying counterfeit money in coming years.

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing, which is responsible for printing all U.S. currency, has begun issuing $50 and $100 bills with two new security features. The new bills have a polyester strip embedded in them with the letters "USA 50" or "USA 100." The strip is located on the left side of the note's face and is printed in an alternating up-and-down pattern. In addition, the words "The United States of America" have been printed repeatedly along the sides of the portrait on the face of the bill. The letters are so tiny they appear like a thin line to the naked eye.

In the future, when you suspect one of your patrons is trying to pass funny money, simply hold it up to the light to check for the polyester strip and use a magnifying glass to read the microprinted words around the portrait. However, these precautions can be used only for $50 and $100 bills from the 1990 series and beyond. Over the next five years, the new security features will be included on newly printed $20, $10 and $5 bills.

The Department of the Treasury has introduced these features because they cannot be easily reproduced by advanced photocopying equipment or printers.

New security features for big bills: embedded strip with "USA 50" or "USA 100," visible only when held up to the light (left), and microprinting on sides of portrait, visible only with a magnifier. The new features spell trouble for counterfeiters who use advanced photocopiers to print funny money.

Pizza recipes available

As pizza grows in popularity (see story, page 42), more restaurateurs are adding it to their menus or spicing up old standby pizza offerings. Now, a new booklet can give your pizza recipes more pizzazz.

The 20-page, full-color booklet features recipes from 13 of the nation's most prestigious pizza chefs, who gathered at the recent Wisconsin Cheese Pizza Chef Showcase in Chicago. Recipes range from spicy Tex-Mex breakfast pizza to tropical jerk-chicken pizza with mango salsa.

Recipes in the booklet emphasize the use of more than just traditional pizza cheeses such as mozzarella, Parmesan and Romano. Lesser-known Muenster and fontina as well as exotic Taleggio, Asiago and Havarti are among the alternative tempting toppers.

This pizza recipe booklet is available free of charge. To order, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Pizza Recipe Booklet, Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board, 8418 Excelsior Drive, Madison, WI 53717.

Thirteen chefs from across the nation contributed pizza recipes to a booklet available free of charge from the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board.

Talking trash

Restaurateurs trying to rid their establishments of ugly, overflowing trash receptacles might consider a new talking, animated friend to help them.

The Trash Thing, created by Automated Fluid Systems of Dayton, Ohio, is a trash can with a difference. A colorful cartoon character decorates the exterior of the low-density compactor, which can compact 10 times the trash volume of conventional disposable trash bags. An automated voice box built into the unit says, "Feed me, I'm hungry," every two minutes and "Yum, yum, thank you," when trash is deposited. The audio and visual appeal of the Trash Thing had kids lining up to toss trash into its mouth during early marketing tests in several McDonald's, according to Bud Thomson, spokesperson for Automated Fluid Systems.

The company hopes to market the Trash Thing in high-traffic areas where large quantities of food are served, such as fast food restaurants, shopping-mall food courts and amusement parks.

A hotter mode of delivery?

Domino's Pizza is well known for delivering its hot pizzas via cars, bicycles and scooters. Might the company switch to solar-powered delivery someday?

Recognizing the need to develop alternative energy sources that are less harmful to the environment, Domino's Pizza cosponsored the design and construction of a solar-powered race car known as Sunrunner.

Built by a 140-member student team from the University of Michigan, Sunrunner won first place in the 1990 General Motors Sunrayce USA by covering 1,641 miles in 72 hours, 50 minutes and 47 seconds. The car was also entered in the 1990 World Solar Challenge in Australia, where it placed third in an international field of 36.

Domino's Pizza and other sponsors have donated the solar-powered race car known as Sunrunner to the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan.

The Trash Thing's creators hope that the talking product will motivate customers to discover the fun of tossing trash.

States grapple with drunk-driving laws

How much can a person drink before being too drunk to drive? It is a question scientists have been trying to answer for decades.

Today, state legislators are trying to further answer this question by stiffening legal definitions of intoxication, particularly with respect to driving. A measurement known as "blood alcohol content" (BAC) is used to determine whether a driver has been impaired by the amount of alcohol he or she has consumed. In most states, driving with a blood alcohol content of .10 is an illegal act. But in the past few years, there has been a movement in state legislatures across the country to lower that level to .08.

Currently, five states—California, Maine, Oregon, Utah and Vermont—have declared .08 to be the threshold of legality for alcohol in the bloodstream. Since the beginning of this year, at least 19 other states have considered lowering their "per se" BAC standards from .10 to .08. New federal grant standards currently under consideration may encourage cash-strapped states to go to .08.

The hospitality industry has traditionally opposed legislation to lower the legal BAC, on the grounds that such an action is a narrow response to broader societal problems. Statistics have shown that most alcohol-related traffic fatalities are brought about by drivers whose BAC levels exceed current standards by quite a bit and that the number of alcohol-related traffic fatalities does not decrease when the BAC is lower. But opposing the lowering of the legal blood alcohol content can carry a tremendous price tag, as restaurateurs in New Hampshire discovered this past spring.

The New Hampshire debate

Blood alcohol content was first an issue in New Hampshire during the 1989–90 legislative session. A hotly debated bill was defeated in the spring of 1990 by the grassroots lobbying efforts of area restaurateurs. Support for lowering the threshold to .08, however, continued to grow in the state, at the urging of groups such as the New Hampshire Safety Council, the New Hampshire Association of Chiefs of Police, and Mothers Against Drunk Driving. The governor then appointed a task force whose report was the jumping-off point for this year's proposed BAC legislation.

"We supported all of the task force's bills except the .08," says Tim Fortier, the New Hampshire Hospitality Association's Government Affairs manager. "We demonstrated our commitment to clearing the highways of drunk drivers, but we didn't feel .08 addressed that. The .08 bill was a superficial attempt to deal with drunk driving. It didn't focus on the real problems of polyusers [those under the influence of both drugs and alcohol], underage drinkers and repeat offenders."

The New Hampshire BAC bill arrived in the state Senate in April, where several votes registered the elected officials' inclination to table the bill. But editorial pressure from the statewide newspaper and political pressure from a prominent state senator encouraged further hearings on the bill.

Pivotal testimony from alcohol servers at the first hearing led to awareness of the restaurant industry's view of the drunk-driving problem. "The news articles focused on the problems we all have when someone on the road is drunk. But the media coverage really did not discuss the plight of the server: what kind of training the server has had, what kind of liability there is, how difficult it can be to identify an impaired patron. The hearing was the first time the legislators heard the server's voice clearly," Fortier says.

As a result, a sympathetic senator introduced an amendment to absolve servers of responsibility for patrons who had up to a .12 BAC level. His good intentions, however, muddied the bill, and the Senate eventually rejected the compromise. "We appreciated the senator's recognition that the responsibility belongs to the drinker, not the server," Fortier says.

State association takes heat

Proponents of the bill reacted to the New Hampshire Hospitality Association's (NHHA) opposition with a full-scale negative media campaign. A local newspaper columnist called the industry "greedy" for its concerns about costs (in the forms of tax losses and judicial expenses). And hospitality industry grassroots efforts were dismissed as big-money lobbying.

Editorials accused the restaurateurs of wanting

States may continue to feel pressure

Currently, federal law allows states to be eligible for federal grants when they implement programs to reduce traffic-safety problems caused by drunk drivers. This grant program allows states to receive funds without lowering the legal BAC level.

But Sen. Dick Bryan (D-NV) has proposed legislation to change that program. New requirements for a grant would include:

- creation and operation of highway sobriety checkpoints;
- utilization of video equipment to detect and prosecute drunk drivers;
- .10 per se BAC level for the first three years of the grant, lowered to .08 for the remaining two years;
- mandatory sentencing for drunk drivers of 48 hours in prison or 100 hours of community service plus 90-day license suspension;
- and creation of a drunk-driving program that is financially self-sustaining through collection of fines and penalties.

Supplemental funds would be available to states that increased enforcement of underage-drinking prohibitions, revoked car registrations from repeat offenders and created "open container" laws, among other things. States could obtain additional funds for changing their legal BAC level to .08 immediately.

This bill was reported out of the Senate Commerce Committee unanimously. It passed the Senate by voice vote on July 7 and has been added to the Senate version of the highway bill. In the House of Representatives, the future of a related bill remains unclear.

"the right to to be able to serve impaired drivers," while another claimed the hospitality industry would make the state a refuge for drunks too scared to drive in neighboring states with .08 laws.

"We wanted very much to respond, but we did not want to give the press more opportunities and ammunition. It was very difficult. Our directors were fuming over the papers' allegations," Fortier says.

After the legislation was defeated, the NHHA decided to speak out. In a June press release, Terry Wentworth, the owner/manager of the Red Parka Pub and the Legislative Affairs chairperson of the NHHA, described the hospitality industry's long-term commitment to serving alcohol responsibly.

"The state's hospitality industry is in the business of responsible alcohol service. Otherwise, we would be placing ourselves and the lives of our employees at great risk when we travel the roads at night after closing our business. We don't make it our business, nor is it good business, to serve patrons excessively," she said.

Lessons learned

The BAC battle is far from over in New Hampshire, but many lessons have been learned.

"Nothing we could do would have helped us avoid the media problem completely. But we look forward to working more closely with the task force and legislators for compromise legislation that helps discourage drunk driving and that incorporates the industry viewpoint," says Fortier.

—*Linda Way*

INS cracks down on employers

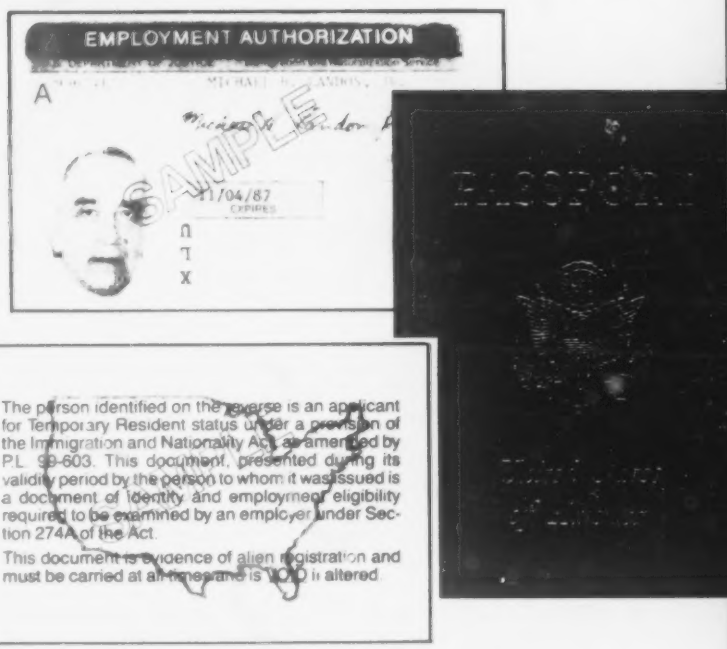
The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has accelerated enforcement of a 1986 law that requires employers to make sure each employee they hire is eligible to work in the United States.

In 1986, faced with a rising tide of illegal immigrants entering the country, the U.S. Congress passed the Immigration Reform and Control Act. By threatening employers with fines and possible jail terms for hiring unauthorized workers, lawmakers hoped to discourage illegal workers from crossing the border by making it tougher for them to get jobs.

To give the INS a paper trail to help track down illegal workers and their employers, Congress required employers to complete paperwork verifying each employee's identity and eligibility to work.

Pointing out that the law is almost five years old and that employers have had enough time to understand their responsibilities, INS commissioner Gene McNary this spring ordered investigators to crack down on employers who violate the law. Under the new policy, INS agents no longer have to warn violators—even those who have committed minor paperwork violations—before assessing a fine.

INS officials say they are focusing on employers who knowingly hire and employ illegal workers. However, the National Restaurant Association has begun to hear reports from foodservice operators that the INS crackdown is resulting in thousands of dollars in fines for restaurateurs and other employers with sloppy paperwork—even though these employers have not knowingly hired any illegal workers.



Although employers argue that issuing steep fines for relatively minor paperwork errors is excessive, the INS is authorized to fine, and is fining, employers for paperwork violations. This crackdown sends a clear signal to all foodservice operators: Make sure INS paperwork is complete and up to date for every employee.

Raids find paperwork violations

Paperwork violations make up the bulk of the violations that INS agents find.

From October 1989 (when the INS began keeping detailed statistics on violations) to March 1991, INS statistics show that 90 percent of violations involved employers who failed to complete an entire *Employment Eligibility Verification Form* (I-9 form) for each employee, as required by the 1986 law.

This trend has continued since commissioner McNary issued his new enforcement policy April 5, 1991. INS data for investigations conducted from April through July (INS's latest statistics) show that 92 percent of employer violations involved faulty I-9s.

One of the businesses the INS inspected this year was the Sugar Bowl Ice Cream Parlor in Scottsdale, Arizona, owned by Carroll and Tamara Huntress. Acting on a tip from a disgruntled ex-employee of the Sugar Bowl, INS agents in Arizona inspected the restaurant in May. Investigators found no illegal workers at the restaurant, but discovered problems with 22 of the business's 30 I-9 forms. In July the INS served the restaurant notice that it owed $6,500 in penalties for numerous omissions and inaccuracies on the 22 forms.

Carroll Huntress explains that he regrets that he pushed the paperwork to the side in the rush of operating his restaurant. "We are a mom-and-pop shop. I am the personnel director, advertising manager, floor manager, you name it. There are so many details in a small shop like ours to take care of," he says.

Although Huntress admit-

ted he was sloppy with the paperwork, he disputed the size of the fine. "There should have been a fine to make a point, but the fine they wanted was totally outrageous," he says. "If we had hired illegal workers, then sure, let us have it. But I had 15 forms that were filled out wrong the exact same way. It's not fair to be penalized for the same mistake 15 times."

Huntress and his wife were able to negotiate the fine down to $3,250 by arguing they had made a good-faith, though imperfect, effort to comply with the law and by pleading that the loss of $6,500 would be an extreme hardship for their two-unit small business, which Huntress says barely skimmed a three percent profit margin last year.

Huntress advises his fellow restaurateurs to pay attention to details when filling out I-9 forms and to fill in every single space completely. "I didn't realize that the INS was going to put everything under a microscope and pick out every little thing that was wrong," he says.

New policy relies on fines

Until this year, the INS had instructed its agents to warn employers after first-time violations and to reinforce the warnings by educating employers about their responsibilities. Commissioner McNary's April directive waived the education-first policy and instructed investigators to fine even first-time violators.

McNary told INS agents to devote more of their time

How to comply with immigration law

The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 prohibits all employers from

- ☐ knowingly hiring any illegal aliens, which includes not only actual knowledge but also knowledge that may be reasonably inferred by noticing suspicious facts and circumstances;
- ☐ hiring any person without completing an *Employment Eligibility Verification Form* (the I-9 form); and
- ☐ continuing to employ an alien who is discovered to be an illegal alien or whose eligibility to work has expired.

Verifying that workers are eligible

Employers must complete an I-9 form for each person hired on or after November 7, 1986. Employers must

- ☐ make sure employees fill out personal information required on the I-9 form (a preparer or translator may help the employee fill out this section, if necessary);
- ☐ examine documents that establish employees' identity and eligibility to work;
- ☐ properly complete and sign the I-9 form themselves;
- ☐ retain the I-9 form (or a copy on microfilm or microfiche) for at least 3 years or until 1 year after the person stops working for the employer, whichever is later;
- ☐ present the I-9 for inspection to an INS or Department of Labor officer upon request (you must be given at least 3 days' advance notice).

Employee documents

Within 3 days of the date of hire, an employee must present to the employer documents to prove his or her identity and work authorization.

Some documents establish both identity and employment eligibility. Other documents establish identity alone or employment eligibility alone. An employer cannot specify which document or documents a person must present, but must see sufficient documents to verify both the employee's identity and employment eligibility.

When completing the I-9 form, the employer must write down the document identification number and expiration date (if any) in the appropriate space on the I-9 for each document an employee provides. Employers need to keep track of each employee's work eligibility to make sure it does not expire. The National Restaurant Association recommends that employers set up a tickler file system to remind managers of when each worker's eligibility document is scheduled to expire.

Unfair employment practices

Employers of four or more persons are prohibited from discriminating against a person (other than an illegal alien) because of the person's national origin or citizenship status. The employer may not

- ☐ request "more or different documents" than those that are required under the law;
- ☐ refuse to honor "documents tendered that on their face reasonably appear to be genuine"; or
- ☐ intimidate, threaten or retaliate against any individual for filing a discrimination complaint or for participating in an investigation, proceeding or hearing.

The law permits employers to hire a U.S. citizen or national over an alien if the two persons are equally qualified.

Penalties for paperwork violations

Operators who fail to comply with the employment-eligibility verification requirements of the law will be ordered by the INS to pay a civil penalty of $100 to $1,000 for each worker to whom such violation applies.

Penalties for hiring violations

Operators who knowingly hire an illegal alien, or continue to employ an illegal worker while knowing that he or she is or has become illegal, will be ordered by the INS to fire the worker and pay a civil penalty of

- ☐ $250 to $2,000 per illegal alien for a first violation;
- ☐ $2,000 to $5,000 per illegal alien for a second violation; and
- ☐ $3,000 to $10,000 per illegal alien if there have been two or more prior violations.

Violators who exhibit a pattern or practice of knowingly hiring or continuing to employ illegal aliens will be ordered to pay a fine of up to $3,000 for each illegal alien and/or will be imprisoned for up to 6 months.

Penalties for discrimination

An employer who violates the anti-discrimination provisions of the law will be ordered to stop the

to enforcing the 1986 law, rather than trying to root out criminal aliens or deter document fraud. He also asked investigators to concentrate on leads from customers, employees, captured illegal aliens and other sources to ferret out employers not complying with the law. Before the new policy, the INS had relied more heavily on random audits of employers to catch violators.

McNary said the INS will continue to educate employers about the law, offering copies of the INS's *Handbook for Employers* and leading seminars for employers. Meanwhile investigators will press ahead to punish violators. "Voluntary compliance remains our objective, but willful violators of the law will be punished," he said.

McNary said he will reevaluate the costs and benefits of placing enforcement priority on employer sanctions. But despite employer complaints, INS officials now say the new policy of issuing fines instead of warnings is most likely here to stay.

discrimination and may be required to pay a civil penalty of

□ $250 to $2,000 for each person discriminated against for a first violation;

□ $2,000 to $5,000 for each person discriminated against for a second violation; and

□ $3,000 to $10,000 for each person discriminated against if there have been two or more prior violations.

The INS may also instruct employers to take preventive measures, such as educating managers about the law's requirements and posting notices to inform employees about their rights and their employer's obligations.

Employers with more than one establishment

For employers with distinct, physically separate subdivisions, each of which handles its own hiring, each subdivision is considered a separate employer for the purposes of IRCA.

However, in an important pending federal case, a multiunit restaurant company is disputing one instance where the INS treated two separate units of the parent company as one employer when assessing civil penalties—even though each unit did its own hiring.

Common mistakes on the I-9

INS officials have noticed that employers often make several common errors when filling out I-9 forms. Robert Elder, employer and labor-relations coordinator for the INS's Washington DC district office, offers the following tips to help employers avoid mistakes.

□ *Make sure employees write down their personal information and sign and date the I-9.* The employer must make sure every employee correctly writes in his or her name, address, date of birth and Social Security number; checks the box stating whether he or she is a U.S. citizen or an alien authorized to work in the United States; and signs and dates the form.

Restaurateur Carroll Huntress, for example, says he was fined in part because several employees wrote down the current date in the space reserved for their birth date. "The employer must review the employee section of the form to make sure it is completed. And if the employee forgot or didn't understand, it is the employer's responsibility to make sure that the employee dates and signs the form," says Elder.

□ *Examine documents carefully, and write down document numbers and expiration dates.* Operators must verify each worker's identity and work eligibility by examining documents provided by the employee. The employer must check the correct boxes on the I-9 to show which documents were presented. In addition, document numbers and expiration dates for each document must be recorded.

"Many employers start off the I-9 form pretty well but omit Social Security numbers and other document numbers and forget to check the correct box to show whether the document being used is a Social Security card, a driver's license or something else," says Elder.

Huntress, for example, was cited for 15 instances of omitting document numbers and expiration dates.

□ *Sign and date the form.* Employers themselves must sign and date the I-9 form and keep it on file for inspection.

To avoid mistakes, Elder recommends that employers sit down with new workers immediately after hiring to complete the I-9. That way the employer will find out early about any problem that makes the employee ineligible to work, he says.

New employer handbook and I-9 coming out

Employers may find it easier to complete I-9 forms after November 21, when the INS says it will issue a redesigned I-9 form as well as a

revised version of its *Handbook for Employers*.

Isaiah Russell, head of employer and labor relations in the INS's Washington DC headquarters, says that the I-9 and the handbook are being revised to make them easier for employers and employees to understand and to implement relatively minor changes in the law's regulations that go into effect November 21, 1991.

Russell says changes in the I-9 form are likely to include more space for employers to keep track of workers' document numbers and expiration dates. The new handbook will provide a revised list of documents employees can use to prove their identity and work eligibility.

The new I-9 form and handbook will not be available until after November 21. Employers may still use the old version of the I-9 after the new form is issued.

For immediate answers to specific questions about the 1986 law, employers can call the INS's employer and labor-relations headquarters in Washington DC at (202) 514-2471 or contact their local INS employer-relations office, listed under U.S. Government in the phone book.

For recorded general information about the 1986 law and its paperwork requirements, operators can call the INS's toll-free hotline at (800) 755-0777.

—Andrew McLauchlin

FICA TAX ON TIPS
IS DAMAGING YOUR BOTTOM LINE

by Pat DiDomenico

Since the mid-1940s, the Ritacco family has operated First Edition, a seafood and pasta restaurant in Bayside, New York. Like any restaurant, the popular family eatery has endured occasional slumps. Yet First Edition has always bounced back to enjoy the more prosperous times.

But these days, more than ever before, owner Robert Ritacco says he fears for the survival of the family business.

Each year since 1988, Ritacco has helplessly watched as $20,000 of would-be profit (nearly half of First Edition's $42,000 net income) is siphoned away from his small business. The missing money is cutting deep into his already razor-thin 4 percent profit margin.

The spent money has not gone toward creation of new menu items, hiring more workers nor starting up training programs. First Edition's $20,000, and millions more dollars from other American restaurateurs, have been snatched away by the federal government each year as part of a 1987 law that requires employers to pay Social Security (FICA) tax on all tips.

"The numbers I have are typical. I can't see how any other restaurateur is avoiding serious damage from FICA," explains Ritacco, who argues that the 1987 FICA law has caused a *tripling* of his federal taxes.

"Restaurateurs need to understand that this is not just another tax increase; this is a backbreaker," he says. "If all restaurateurs knew what FICA was taking from them, they'd have a heart attack."

Angry restaurateurs resent having to pay payroll taxes on money that never touches their hands. And they do not plan on simply sitting back and watching FICA taxes eat up the restaurant's bottom line.

Ritacco and other operators are currently involved in an all-out effort, led by the National Restaurant Association, to repeal the FICA tax-on-tips law. Letters and phone calls to Congress are the battering rams being used to knock down the unfair tax law. Proposed legislation would restore pre-1988 requirements for payment of Social Security taxes. That is, FICA taxes would be paid only on tips that are used to satisfy minimum-wage requirements.

Inequities of the FICA tax

"The logic of our paying taxes on income our employees receive directly from our customers escapes me," explains Robert C. Trotter, owner of Charlie Trotter's restaurant in Chicago, who did not escape paying an extra $28,000 in FICA taxes last year.

The lack of employer control over tips, Trotter notes, is one of the most compelling arguments in favor of repeal. Restaurateurs agree that they are responsible for paying FICA taxes on wages that they can control. But because tipping is a transaction between server and customer, restaurateurs say it is unfair to categorize tips as taxable payroll wages.

During hearings on the FICA proposal in 1987, the late Sen. John Heinz (R-PA) touched on this argument, saying, "There appears to be no rational reason to justify the proposed change. Management has no control over whether a customer will tip or how much he or she will tip." Another senator, John Chafee (R-RI), referred that year to the FICA plan as "nonsense."

Richard R. Frank, vice president of Lawry's Restaurants, Inc., in Los Angeles, points to another inequity: While tips are not allowed to be fully credited against an employer's federal minimum-wage obligations, tax law requires employers to pay FICA taxes on all tips.

"Either allow 100 percent of reported tips to go against the minimum wage, or eliminate the FICA tax on the portion of reported tips in excess of the minimum-wage credit," argued Frank in a letter to Sen. Alan Cranston (D-CA).

Frank says his company has paid nearly $500,000 in added FICA taxes over the past three years. Frank contends that the added taxes, which account for 43 percent of Lawry's after-tax profits, "could have otherwise gone into building our business and creating jobs."

The FICA law has put restaurateurs in an unenviable position. Employers are now put at the mercy of their employees. A boss cannot control the amount of tip income an employee receives or reports, yet underreporting by employees can lead to the IRS demanding thousands of dollars in back FICA taxes from restaurateurs. (See "IRS Tip Audits Spark FICA Friction" in September 1991 ***Restaurants USA.***)

Restaurateurs also strongly object to the reason the increased tax was added in 1988. They say that foodservice was unfairly singled out

as a taxing "victim" in order to raise federal revenues to meet the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings deficit reduction targets. The additional revenue was not needed to boost the Social Security trust fund, which is what FICA taxes are ostensibly for, nor will it increase retirement benefits for tipped workers. Restaurateurs resent the use of this unfair tax money to make the federal budget deficit appear smaller.

The impact

The financial burden brought on by this unexpected tax has forced many restaurants to teeter on the brink of shutting down.

Take the example of a restaurant with annual sales of $750,000 and 15 tipped employees who report an average of $7.50 in tips per hour. Each of the three years since the law took effect, this restaurant would have been forced to pay approximately $8,300 in additional FICA taxes. FICA contributions for such a restaurant would almost triple.

So far, the additional FICA taxes have not caused a massive closing of eateries around the country. But many are being forced to compromise quality in their restaurants by cutting staff, benefits and even working hours.

At Salty's Harborside Restaurant in Punta Gorda, Florida, higher taxes have caused a reduction in working hours for the 48-worker staff as owners try to avoid higher menu prices. Food and beverage director Jay Fields says the fallout from the added FICA tax will ultimately hurt the customer.

"The bottom line is that the public will be the one to suffer. They will be the true losers. They will get hit with higher prices," says Fields. "How are we going to pull out of this economic crunch if we are confronted with more regulation and taxes?"

Tom Margittai, owner/partner at The Four Seasons in New York City, says the FICA taxes amount to a "devastating blow to our operation's bottom line." Margittai says the restaurant has been forced to lay off many employees, institute a hiring and salary freeze, and put on hold many routine maintenance projects and equipment purchases.

At Matty's Wayside Inn in Glenview, Illinois, more cuts in employee benefits are being considered. Explains owner Matty Fegers, "This legislation has forced me to increase menu prices, lay off personnel, and decrease the hours of waitstaff whenever possible, as I can no longer run a profitable business." Fegers says his restaurant's next cutback will most likely come in the area of health and accident insurance offered to employees.

How the FICA tax happened

Congress first addressed the issue of taxation on tip income during debate over the Social Security Amendments of 1965. At that time, Congress agreed that tip income was a different kind of income and could not be treated the same as regular wages. Therefore, Congress decided that employers must pay FICA taxes on all wages plus on any tip income used as a "tip credit" to satisfy an employer's minimum-wage obligations.

But on January 1, 1988, a new law took effect that required employers to pay Social Security payroll taxes on all tip income. The measure had been passed hastily as part of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1987, a tax package aimed at finding revenue to reduce the federal deficit.

The National Restaurant Association fought hard to eliminate the last-minute addition of the FICA tax-on-tips provision from the $9 billion tax package. But intense pressure to reduce the deficit sealed final approval for the FICA provision. So far, the 1987 law has cost employers more than $800 million in added FICA taxes over the past three years.

An effort to repeal the FICA law began almost immediately after its approval. During the 101st Congress (1989–90), repeal legislation garnered 175 sponsors in the House and 23 sponsors in the Senate. That bill failed to make it to a floor vote.

Again in March 1991, legislation to repeal the FICA tax-on-tips law was introduced in the 102nd Congress. Sen. John Breaux (D–LA) and Rep. Byron Dorgan (D–ND) initiated repeal bills in each house of Congress.

"I do not believe that Congress fully understood the adverse conse-

What restaurateurs are saying about the FICA tax

"I have been in business for over 15 years, but my business has never been more negatively impacted than when Congress passed the law making tips fully taxable for FICA purposes."

—Frank B. Hanna Sr.
Royal Exchange Pub
Salisbury, Maryland

"Our industry is being taxed to death. . . . In the 25 years I have worked in the industry, I've never been so scared about my future. It is sad to think of all the work, sweat and pride that has gone into my business, and yet not to know for sure if I'll be around next spring."

—Michael F. Greenfield
Michael's Seafood & Steak Tavern
Ludlow, Vermont

"Congress has, perhaps unwittingly, helped kill the entrepreneurial spirit in this country at a time when foreign competition is already doing its share. Surely no American wants to see companies fall by the wayside because of our own laws, which cause such hardship on the business owner."

—Carole Jean Rogers
The Rib Tavern, Inc.
Louisville, Kentucky

"We operate on an extremely thin profit margin. If our lawmakers are truly concerned about jobs, they should do all they can to keep our businesses healthy—not make it more expensive to operate."

—Paul Kreins
Bowl-ero
Idaho Falls, Idaho

"The employer-paid FICA tax on tips is not only unjust, but it's another way of ducking true fiscal responsibility by finding a gray area to tax."

—Walter Kane
Domino's Pizza
Tucson, Arizona

quences of that 1987 decision," Dorgan told his colleagues this year while introducing the repeal bill known as H.R. 1472. "This change in the FICA tax treatment of tips has had a significant impact on a lot of small restaurants in North Dakota and around the country. I think we ought to change this unfair law."

In only six months, this repeal legislation has already attracted more cosponsors than the entire previous effort. As of September 25, FICA repeal legislation had garnered 198 House sponsors and 33 sponsors in the Senate.

With constant pressure from America's restaurateurs, the association hopes to gather at least a majority of the Congress (218 House members and 51 senators) as sponsors of the legislation. Collecting additional sponsors would further increase pressure on committee leaders to bring the legislation to a vote before the full Congress.

The opposition

When Congress gets hold of a tax-revenue source, however, undoing such a tax can be as difficult as trying to unbake an overcooked muffin.

In a May 1991 luncheon, members of the New Jersey Restaurant Association engaged Sen. Bill Bradley (D-NJ) in a spirited discussion about repealing the 3-year-old FICA law. Bradley's defiance against repealing the tax on tips is symbolic of the uphill road that the repeal legislation must travel.

"At this point, I don't support any change in the law," said Bradley. "Not unless you come up with some other way to offset that money. Every group wants less taxes—less taxes for me and more spending for me." Making prudent fiscal policy, Bradley said, "means saying no."

Proposals that lead to less revenue for the government are often difficult to push through Congress. The fight for FICA repeal may also be complicated by a new "pay-as-you-go" agreement that was part of Congress's 1990 budget agreement. That provision requires any reduction in Social Security revenues to be offset either by Social Security tax increases or by cuts in Social Security programs.

Like many other legislators, Idaho senator Steve Symms (R) is aware of the "pay-as-you-go" complication, but has signed on to cosponsor the FICA repeal legislation. As Symms wrote in a letter to a Boise restaurateur, "While I am concerned about where these offsetting tax increases will fall, I have decided to cosponsor this legislation because I believe in its intent."

Before the full Congress can cast its votes on this issue, FICA repeal legislation must pass through powerful tax-writing committees: the Senate Finance Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee. The association is leading a focused effort to convince committee members—and especially the chairmen of those committees, Sen. Lloyd Bentsen (D-TX) and Rep. Dan Rostenkowski (D-IL)—to allow a floor vote on the issue.

Because of the pay-as-you-go law and the large federal deficit, revenue-losing legislation faces an especially difficult battle this year. As Sen. Dale Bumpers (D-AR), chairman of the Senate Small Business Committee, told a constituent, the tax-writing committees "have not been receptive to legislative proposals eliminating current taxes or creating tax deductions."

Association efforts

The National Restaurant Association's lobbying staff, while providing steering and direction, continues to rely on association members to supply the real power behind the FICA repeal movement. Since H.R. 1472 and S. 765 were introduced in March, restaurateurs have mailed and faxed thousands of letters to their representatives in Congress.

"Restaurateurs are sometimes divided on an issue, but on the FICA tax, they are unanimous," says William P. Fisher, the association's executive vice president. "Restaurateurs are absolutely passionate about FICA repeal. You can see it in their letters."

In mid-August, the association began a letter-writing campaign by restaurateurs who live in congressional districts of the 24 legislators who cosponsored FICA repeal in the last Congress yet have failed to sign on again this year. Restaurateurs in these districts have already begun prompting these lawmakers to again join the FICA repeal fight. In fact, four of these legislators recently jumped aboard the FICA-repeal bandwagon.

Also during the August recess, restaurateurs in more than 20 states hosted congressional district meetings in their establishments. The meetings brought lawmakers face to face with restaurant issues—especially FICA repeal. Many of these meetings involved members of the influential tax committees.

The association's goal is to collect as many cosponsors as possible in order to demonstrate the significance of this legislation and bring quicker action by the chairmen of the tax-writing committees.

The National Restaurant Association continues to urge restaurateurs to meet with their lawmakers personally and to write, call or fax their FICA arguments to their representatives and senators. Although association lobbyists are working for FICA repeal and other issues, personal meetings and letters from hometown taxpayers are the most effective way to influence a member of Congress. ❑

Pat DiDomenico is a communications specialist at the National Restaurant Association.

How to fight FICA

When you write to your member of Congress to urge the repeal of the FICA tax on tips, be sure to explain:

- ☐ specific ways in which the FICA law has damaged your business or eliminated jobs
- ☐ that charging payroll taxes on non-payroll income is unjust because employers don't control tip income
- ☐ that federal tip laws concerning FICA and minimum wage are inconsistent
- ☐ that increasing Social Security (FICA) taxes is an artificial way of balancing the budget.

Address letters to your member of Congress at U.S. House of Representatives, Washington DC 20515, and to your senators at U.S. Senate, Washington DC 20510.

For more information on how individual restaurateurs can help repeal the law, contact Patti Stinger at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5953.

TURNING TABLES

WHEN THE RUSH IS ON

It goes without saying that if you can turn more tables during peak periods and cut down on waiting time, your restaurant will be more profitable. Servers who pick up the pace earn more money, too. Here's how one Manhattan restaurant turns controlled haste into profit.

Photos by Charlie Samuels

by Toni Lydecker

Union Square Cafe's front door opens constantly as customers flow in and out. At lunchtime, publishers and advertising executives talk shop leisurely, but glance at their watches all the while. In the evening, stylish locals and tourists stop in for dinner, but some ask nervously how long the cab ride uptown to the theater will take.

Servers glide swiftly from dining room to kitchen and back. Diners hoist tuna club sandwiches and forksful of vegetable risotto. Managers hustle to answer the phone or set a table for the next party. A bartender

glances at the computer screen to see how many drinks need ice, then deftly throws a scoop over the four glasses in her hand. Loud as it is, the music is almost drowned out by the din of conversation and order-taking.

The rush is on, but not to worry. At this New York City restaurant, frenzied activity is the norm. Service manager Patrick Norton explains, "This restaurant is like a Porsche, built to run most efficiently at 80 miles per hour. When it's not busy, we're waiting for it to be busy. When it hits, everyone goes."

Busy means profitable

Tending bar at Union Square Cafe last New Year's Eve, Agnes Devereux worked from 6 p.m. to 3 a.m. without stopping—and loved every minute. Partly, it was the satisfaction of doing a hard job well. But she adds, "That night, I made the most money I ever have."

For everyone from Devereux to owner Danny Meyer, the profit motive adds to the thrill of coping with a crowd. Handled expertly, a peak period sends up a geyser of profit to sustain the whole operation.

"The pace is everything," says Meyer. When the timing is right, the restaurant can serve 300 people with ease. When it's off, 220 can seem overwhelming.

Over seven successful years, Union Square Cafe has developed soup-to-nuts systems that help the staff cope with the rush—most of the time—without cutting corners on food or service.

Booking tables

A successful day depends so much on how reservations are handled that Meyer employs a full-time manager, Ellie Campbell, for that purpose alone. "She is highly qualified, highly paid and worth every penny," he says.

Spacing out reservations at 15-minute intervals not only helps floor managers greet and seat customers gracefully, but heads off the danger of slamming the kitchen. For the same reason, Campbell books fewer tables than are available in the critical 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. time slots. The larger the party, the longer they take to order and eat, making it a gamble to book a table for eight twice in an evening.

Campbell recognizes most of the restaurant's regulars by voice on the telephone and, according to Meyer, "makes everyone feel great, whether they've been here before or not." Campbell says honesty is important, too. "If we're over our limit for pre-theater, I tell them we can't promise to have them out by show time," she says.

Even so, frustrated callers sometimes accuse her of holding tables aside or assume that business is slow when it isn't. "It's summer; you must have a table" is a line Campbell has heard more than once.

Because an empty table means lost money, the restaurant tries to minimize no-shows. Patrons are asked to reconfirm their reservations; Campbell calls those who fail to do so several hours before the arrival time. A mark indicating reservations made that day tells her whom to skip.

Greeting and seating

Unfortunately, customers don't always behave according to the reservations book. Some parties might arrive a little early, others a little late. Or maybe only part of the party arrives on time, leading to delays in ordering. "You're working on averages," says Meyer. "Most of the time, luck is in our favor. But you can have a situation where the 12:15s are all late, the 12:30s are on time and the 12:45s are early. When that happens, the kitchen gets slammed."

A few minutes before the first arrivals, Meyer and the floor manager "plot" the tables, trying to foresee and avoid foul-ups. If the entire 1:30 slot is booked, they know they'll need to get three out of four of the 12:00 tables back by then and will ask the servers to work toward that goal.

Reading through the reservations list several times helps managers and servers instantly recognize the names of arriving customers, even those who have never been in the restaurant before. This technique contributes to the warm service reviewers often mention in writing about Union Square Cafe.

As the meal progresses, Meyer and his staff circulate through the dining rooms, trying to gauge how many walk-ins they can take. If some tables are eating ahead of schedule, Meyer thinks about squeezing in an extra table or two. Meyer likes to "push it to the edge," but adds, "You can't be a pig about it just to maximize revenues, or you'll end up with angry customers."

Moving the meal along

Brisk, attentive service pleases customers and turns tables faster. Servers are encouraged to present the menu immediately and return a few minutes later to explain the specials and answer questions.

Though strong-arm tactics are taboo, servers might nudge procrastinators, saying, "The softshell crabs are excellent tonight, but they're selling

Lunchtime in the Union Square Cafe kitchen. "Sometimes I actually slow the tempo down when we get busy," says sous chef and expediter Mark Dorian. "There's only so much the cooks can do, and if I threw all the tickets at them, they'd be crippled."

fast. If you'd like, I'll see if the kitchen has any left."

Some servers don't write down orders before punching them into the terminal. Devereux, who is one such server, thinks that having to concentrate improves her accuracy. It's too easy to mentally disengage while scribbling down an order for steak with a side of spinach. Listening, she remembers to say the steak already comes with spinach.

Appetizers are normally fired six to nine minutes after the order hits the kitchen, with a goal of 10 minutes for entrees. Those times can be trimmed a little for lunch and for the dozen pre-theater tables the restaurant books. The speed is appreciated by customers who have places to go and people to see. "People are often nervous, especially if they're going uptown," says Norton. "We let them know we can get them out on time if they work with us." In other words, patrons can't linger over a second cocktail and expect the kitchen to shoot out the main course on demand.

Servers find that clearing utensils and dishes off the table as soon as customers have finished helps move the meal along. "When people have nothing to toy with, they get restless. Usually, if the coffee cups are gone, they'll go ahead and ask for the check," says Devereux.

Smooth service

New hires must survive five shifts, an exam and an interview with Meyer before joining the permanent staff. Staff members who make it have strong technical skills and thrive on pressure.

But Meyer wants something beyond efficiency. "I want customers to perceive our service as intelligent," he says. "I think people like the fact that everyone from me on down is taking care of them." Because Meyer worries that bussers, no matter how competent, might not give well-informed answers to inquiries about food and wine, servers at Union Square Cafe bus their own tables. When servers get behind, managers pitch in.

To ensure smooth service, every server has an official partner, and unofficially, they watch out for one another. Everyone especially keeps an eye on station 2, where the server must handle three tables in the bar

During each shift, two servers support the others as food and beverage deliverers. One transports food from the kitchen; the other shuttles drinks from the bar and opens wine.

area, then sprint up several steps to reach the others. In each dining area, a point-of-sale terminal is within easy reach. And there is a special "Help!" code that the server on solo duty in the mezzanine dining room (up a steep flight of stairs) can use to call for a backup.

Every meal period, two servers are assigned in rotation to support the other servers as beverage and food deliverers. The first does nothing but deliver food, while the second shuttles drinks from the bar and opens wine.

Managers are on hand to fill in around the edges or smooth out problems. On a given day, the service manager might help a harried server by resetting tables, act as a go-between with the kitchen to expedite an order and solve a missing glassware mystery. (Maybe someone dropped a rack the night before.)

Kitchen business

That emotions rarely boil over in the kitchen is due largely to executive chef Michael Romano's calm temperament. "I've never heard him raise his voice," says Devereux. "He won't let waiters blow off steam in the kitchen, complaining about customers. It can upset people on the line, and they need to concentrate on their own work."

If front-of-the-house staff fail in their efforts to stagger orders, the kitchen computer keeps spewing out orders. Occasionally, several orders go into computer limbo, to stay until someone suddenly notices they have not come out. It is sous chef Mark Dorian's job, as expediter, to make sense of this chaos for the cooks.

"Sometimes, I actually slow the tempo down when we get busy. There's only so much the cooks can

Lunchtime at Union Square Cafe

10:40 One bartender stockpiles glasses and counts money, while another cuts lemons and limes. The owner is on the phone, trying to straighten out "an equipment problem" with a new credit-card system. In the kitchen, soups are finished, garnishes and sauces readied.

11:00 The staff eats the "family meal" together, clears the dishes, resets the tables.

11:30 At a five-minute meeting, the owner urges servers to get the menus out fast to help the pacing along. The sous chef explains the day's specials and passes them around to servers for tasting.

11:40 Plotting their lunchtime strategy, the owner and floor manager worry about a large party coming at 1:30. They decide to seat the first arrivals of the day at tables 34 and 36, in the hope of getting those tables back in time for the large party. The server is alerted to this plan.

12:00 Customers begin to arrive. Two women and a man are seated at table 13, near the door. "Mr. Punctual, aren't you?" the owner says jokingly to one regular, while another is complimented on his tie. First-timers get a breezy, efficient reception, too: "Come with me; we're all set for you."

12:35 The board in the kitchen is completely filled, which means appetizer orders are coming in on schedule. Table 13 is eating oysters with champagne.

12:45 The seating chart fills up with Xs (or, in the case of an uncompleted party, half an X). Table 13's burgers arrive. The kitchen is humming.

1:05 Table 13 is cleared, and the customers ask for dessert menus. No dessert after all. They order coffee.

1:30 The lunchtime rush peaks, as the second big seating begins. Three parties line the wall beside the bar, having been told, "We'll have your table ready any minute." Tables 34 and 36 are vacated and set up for the large group.

1:35 The three waiting parties are seated.

2:00 The big party (with the 1:30 reservation) finally arrives, to the owner's relief. The restaurant is still filled, but the pace begins to ease.

2:30 Most tables are eating dessert, leaving servers free to reset tables, ready condiments for dinner, fold napkins. The kitchen is still buzzing, as some staff finish lunch orders, while the newly arrived evening crew begins dinner prep. The bar is down to one bartender, who counts money and begins to stockpile glasses for dinner.

do, and if I threw all the tickets at them, they'd be crippled," he says.

The kitchen is challenged by an ambitious menu with virtually no crossover; each dish has its own sauce, its own garnish. In part because of the menu's complexity, the restaurant cannot accept all the pretheater requests it gets. "There is a constant battle between having a forward-thinking, imaginative menu and a streamlined one that will allow us to handle a little more business," says Meyer.

Meyer is not afraid to consider new methods of expediting service. Eating in another restaurant, Meyer noted that seven of eight appetizers were from the cold station, a menu decision that translated directly into faster table turns than at Union Square Cafe, where 9 of 15 appetizers were hot. Meyer and Romano decided to drop one hot appetizer that was slowing down the kitchen and to replace another hot appetizer with a cold appetizer.

Meyer and Romano also avoid planning nightly specials that rely on the same person who is responsible for the restaurant's traditional weekly special. Tuesday is the night for grilled rib steak, for example, so the other special is never from the grill. Whatever the special is for Monday, it won't be from the saute station, because that cook is already preparing the tarragon chicken.

Part of the allure

There are as many tricks for handling a crowd as there are restaurateurs facing this enviable problem. Those that *stay* busy understand one thing: Letting food and service standards slide during the rush can be fatal. Unless they feel well-treated, customers will go elsewhere.

For the luckiest ones, like Union Square Cafe, the filled tables and bustling staff become part of the allure. "People don't always realize it, but one of the things customers like about this restaurant is the energy level," says Meyer. "Usually, excellence comes with a more subdued atmosphere. We offer the same quality in an exciting atmosphere." ❑

Toni Lydecker is a writer in Irvington, New York.

DO YOU HAVE A COST OF SALES PROBLEM?

by John R. Rousselle

The first step in controlling food and beverage cost is to find out whether you have a problem that needs controlling. This industry expert says that some restaurateurs are doing better than they think at controlling food cost—and some are doing much worse.

The successful restaurant manager must be able to evaluate cost of sales with precision. All too often, management isn't fully aware of the success of its cost-of-sales control system.

What does cost of sales mean? It's how much you spend on the food and beverages that you serve. For the purposes of this article, "food and beverage cost," "cost of sales" and "COS" will be used interchangeably.

Historically, cost of sales and labor cost have been the two highest costs of restaurant operations. The National Restaurant Association's *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1991* indicates that combined food and beverage cost was the highest cost on a weighted-average basis at both limited-menu tableservice restaurants and fast food restaurants. At cafeterias and full-menu tableservice (fine-dining) restaurants, combined food and beverage cost was just slightly less than labor cost. See figure 1.

Control of food and beverage cost is so important that it requires constant attention. However, attention to cost of sales usually intensifies only when there is a problem with it. During these periods, management reviews the various control systems in place and initiates other procedures to correct the problem. It is common for these extraordinary measures to have the result of reducing efforts in other important areas of the operation.

It is also true that when management perceives that food and beverage cost is OK, then the systems that control these costs are somewhat overlooked and effort is devoted to weaker areas.

The key is to know when cost of sales really needs special attention and when it is satisfactory. What we really want to know is how well the cost-of-sales control system is functioning. Determining this will be possible only with an accurate evaluation of cost of sales. To do so requires (1) having an acceptable standard for comparison and (2) knowing the actual cost of sales for the period.

The sources of standards

There are four possible sources of standards against which an operator

FIGURE 1

Cost of sales and labor cost in restaurants

Cost of sales (or combined food and beverage cost) is the highest cost in two out of the four restaurant categories

	Full-menu tableservice	Limited-menu tableservice	Limited-menu no tableservice	Cafeterias
Cost of food	27.3%	27.6%	33.1%	31.1%
Cost of beverages	5.4	3.9	0.5	0.9
Cost of sales	**32.7**	**31.5**	**33.6**	**32.0**
Payroll	28.8	26.6	23.9	29.7
Employee benefits	4.3	3.6	2.5	2.6
Total labor	33.1	30.2	26.4	32.3

Note: *All figures are weighted averages.*
Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1991*

can compare cost of sales. An operator may use industry results, sister-unit results, historical results or a self-generated standard. Each source has advantages and disadvantages.

Industry results, both national and local, are published periodically by various agencies. Although published results are interesting and offer some broad guidelines, an individual operator should probably not rely on this data for strict comparisons. Published figures are averages for operations that participate in a survey. Unless an operator knows that operations in a survey correspond exactly to his or her restaurant, the standard won't be appropriate for that particular operation. In addition, published data reflect past information. Given the dynamic nature of our industry, standards should be based on current information.

Even more important is the fact that published studies show only what has happened—not what should have happened. Knowing that the average full-menu restaurant had a cost of sales of 32.7 percent does not mean that it *should* be at that level. Possibly it should have been lower—maybe much lower.

Using standards produced from sister units is not much better. Even units of a chain are different. They may have identical layouts, items, prices, vendors and operating systems, but they are still different. Three of the most significant differences are revenues, sales mix and employees. Any of these can alter the cost of sales so much as to make results and standards from other units irrelevant.

Historical results are probably the most common standards because they are usually readily available. The thought is that as long as the operation matches or exceeds the previous results, everything is satisfactory.

The first weakness of the historical approach is that it ignores the dynamic nature of the restaurant business. Employees come and go, vendor prices change, menus and recipes change, and customer preferences change. These changes may make one period's cost of sales very different from that of a previous period.

The other weakness of using historical results is that the previous period's results may have been disastrous. A slight improvement on a terrible outcome is usually not a reason for joy. It is a little like a football team that was beaten by 50 points last week rejoicing over a 30-point loss this week. It may be an improvement, but it is still a terrible beating and the team needs work. Unfortunately, some managers view any improvement in cost of sales as an indication that it is satisfactory.

What is needed is a standard that applies to the specific restaurant in the current period. Forget the past and ignore other operations. This standard requires an ongoing examination of the restaurant. The basic data needed is available in many operations now or can be generated without an unreasonable amount of effort.

Generating your own standard

The following are the steps in developing such a standard.

1. Develop and use standard recipes.
2. Calculate the standard cost of menu items.
3. Select proper prices for menu items.
4. Track the sales mix.

Use standard recipes. One of the most important control steps of management is to develop and require employees to use standard recipes. Management cannot know the cost of an item unless the contents are known. Whenever a company directs employees to prepare an item, management must know its ingredients, quantity and yield. Without this information, management can only guess at the cost of the item. If management doesn't know the cost of one unit of an item, how can it know the cost of a day's or week's worth of the item?

An additional reason for standard

Determining a standard for cost of sales

Figure 2a yields a false standard for cost of sales because it does not take into account the restaurant's sales mix

Item	Price	Cost	Cost%
A	$5.00	$1.75	35.0%
B	7.00	3.30	47.1%
		Mean =	41.1%

Figure 2b reflects the restaurant's sales mix to arrive at a true standard

Item	Price	Cost	Cost%	Sold	Total cost	Total sales
A	$5.00	$1.75	35.0%	50	$ 87.50	$ 250.00
B	7.00	3.30	47.1%	150	495.00	1,050.00
				Totals	$582.50	$1,300.00
		$583 / $1,300 =	44.8%		Gross profit =	$ 717.50

In figure 2c, a change in the sales mix makes for a lower cost of sales than in figure 2b. Note, however, that gross profit is lower

Item	Price	Cost	Cost%	Sold	Total cost	Total sales
A	$5.00	$1.75	35.0%	150	262.50	$ 750.00
B	7.00	3.30	47.1%	50	165.00	350.00
				Totals	$427.50	$1,100.00
		$428 / $1,100 =	38.9%		Gross profit =	$ 672.50

recipes is the importance of consistency to the success of a hospitality operation. Customers may contend that they like to try new things, but the truth is that the typical American consumer doesn't really like surprises. In particular, customers don't like to take chances with their stomachs. Normally, they will choose an item they know over one they are unfamiliar with. We see this daily in customers who select the same items each time they enter a restaurant. The only way to ensure that guests receive consistent products is the adoption and use of standard recipes.

Calculate the standard cost of menu items. Calculating the cost of the standard recipe from the prices paid for the ingredients is a necessary and potentially time-consuming next step.

To maintain an up-to-date list of each item's cost (the COS standard), these calculations should be done frequently. Ideally, the cost of each item is recalculated each time the cost of an ingredient changes. In times of frequent vendor price changes, most items should be re-costed weekly or several times a week. Even in times of relative price stability, ingredient cost changes are frequent enough to call for recalculating the standard costs monthly.

Computerized restaurant management systems have significantly eased this burden by making these calculations for management. These systems combine stored standard recipes with current vendor prices (input by the operator) to produce accurate and current item cost whenever requested.

Without a computer system, management must do this work manually. The time required to re-cost an entire menu discourages most from the task. At a minimum, all items should be re-costed twice a year. Popular items, particularly entrees and other high-cost items, should be done at least monthly.

Select proper prices for menu items. Selecting prices for products and services is one of management's most important tasks. Managers should keep in mind that it requires attention to a number of factors other than the cost of items. The other factors that are particularly important are market demand, availability from competitors, and the ambience and service style of the operation. The price should be selected, not merely calculated from the item's cost plus some desired markup.

Track the sales mix. The final step in determining an operation's individual cost-of-sales standard is to track the sales mix. That is, the manager must determine the number of items sold as compared with other items. Figure 2 illustrates the importance of this step with a simple example. It presents the results of a two-product operation.

Figure 2a shows the price, cost and resultant cost percentage for the two items. Some managers might accept the 41.1 percent figure as a standard for cost of sales because it is an "average" of the items' cost percentages. However, as we will see, this acceptance could cause some serious management errors. To find a true standard cost, a manager must consider the level of sales of the items.

In figure 2b, the operation sold 50 of item A and 150 of item B. The figure shows the resulting cost and sales for each item and the total. This result yields a weighted average of 44.8 percent.

In figure 2c, the sales of items A and B have been switched. This combination of sales generates a completely different average of 38.9 percent—a 6 percent difference. This change is due only to a different sales mix. The items, their prices and their cost were unchanged.

Ignoring these results can lead to serious management mistakes. For example, if a manager accepted the mean from figure 2a as the standard, but the sales mix is as in 2b, management would probably waste time solving a problem that doesn't exist. Fig-

ure 2b shows that the standard should be 44.8 percent. If actual cost of sales is 44.9 percent, it would be a sign of very effective cost control when compared with the appropriate standard of 44.8 percent. However, if management is expecting cost of sales to be closer to the mean figure of 41.1 percent, it may view the results as a disaster. One can imagine the time and effort that would be spent looking for the "missing" 4 percent.

On the other hand, if actual results are as in Figure 2c, a different scenario would follow. Suppose the actual cost of sales is 41 percent. If the mean of 41.1 percent is accepted as the standard, management would be satisfied with the cost-control system. However, figure 2c indicates that the cost of sales should be 38.9 percent. This is more than 2 percent lower than the actual results. Most operators would consider a 2 percent variance from the standard to be unacceptable and a sign of a control problem. So a problem might be ignored if the wrong standard is used.

FIGURE 3

Calculation of food and beverage cost

Food cost		Beverage cost	
Beginning inventory	$ 4,000	Beginning inventory	$ 3,500
+ Purchases	45,000	+ Purchases	15,000
+ Delivery charges	100	+ Delivery charges	100
− Ending inventory	4,500	− Ending inventory	3,000
Cost of food consumed	$44,600	Cost of beverages	$15,600
− Employee meals	3,000		
Cost of food sold	$41,600	Cost of beverages	$15,600
Sales	$84,000	Sales	$50,000

Food cost % = Cost of food sold/food sales
= $41,600/$84,000
= 49.5%

Beverage cost % = Cost of beverages/beverage sales
= $15,600/$50,000
= 31.2%

Total cost of sales

Sales		Cost	
Food	$84,000	Food	$41,600
Beverage	$50,000	Beverage	$15,600
Total	$134,000	Total	$57,200

$$\frac{\$57,200}{\$134,000} = 42.7\%$$

The implications for profits

Figure 2 also illustrates another important point. Notice that the gross profit is higher with the sales mix that has a higher cost of sales, $717.50 versus $672.50. This example defies the frequently held notion that the key to increased profits is to reduce cost of sales. It's not true. Lower cost of sales does not guarantee higher profits. Therefore, operators who seek to increase profits by reducing cost of sales are on a false quest. In fact, their efforts may lead to lower profits.

Tracking the sales mix is relatively easy with current point-of-sale devices. If a restaurant doesn't have a point-of-sale system with this capability, managers must use another method. Low-volume operations can record item sales by reviewing all guest checks daily—a practice that can be too time-consuming for high-volume operations. A random sample of checks may be used at high-volume operations. For example, if managers want to sample 10 percent of checks, all checks with the ending check number "1" can be pulled and their items recorded. Reviewing checks with ending numbers of "1" and "2" would generate a 20 percent sample size.

Any of these methods will work satisfactorily if properly done. The important thing to remember is that the sales mix must be determined for each period for which a cost-of-sales standard is desired. Each day's, week's and month's sales mix will be different. Thus, even if the standard costs of individual items are unchanged, the standard for total cost of sales will vary from period to period because the sales mix will be different. To assume that it will be the same (that is, that tracking the sales mix is unnecessary) is dangerous. It denies the dynamic nature of the industry and will ultimately create management error by relying on inaccurate information.

Calculating actual cost of sales

The formulas for the calculation of food cost and beverage cost are almost identical. See figure 3. The only difference is the adjustment made to food cost for the cost of free meals given to employees.

These simple formulas are management's most powerful control tool. Without calculating these costs on a regular basis, management has no way to evaluate the success of its cost-of-sales control system. At a minimum, these costs should be determined monthly. If the operation's cost of sales deviates too far from the standard, management should make these calculations more frequently.

Don't chase phantoms or ignore weaknesses

Controlling cost of sales is a difficult task. However, it is more difficult if management cannot clearly identify when a problem exists. Accurate generation of both a cost-of-sales standard and the actual cost of sales is extremely important. Restaurant managers have too much to do to be chasing phantom problems or ignoring true weakness in the operation. ❑

John R. Rousselle is an associate professor in the Department of Restaurant, Hotel and Institutional Management at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. He is the former owner of a family-style restaurant and is currently writing a book on cost control.

SAVOR THE SQUASH

by Jay Solomon

Martha Vaughan

Until recently, squash had an image problem. The family of oddly shaped vegetables wasn't hip enough to swing to the tunes of nouvelle cuisine. Baby squash and squash flowers were cute, but larger squash were told, in effect, to get a name change and lose some weight. Squash were big, lumpy vegetables with no place to go.

Then came the 1990s, and the advent of wholesome, unpretentious cuisine. The humble and underrated squash have been enthusiastically welcomed into the kitchen. With a little ingenuity, the motley crew of squash adds flair, texture and substance to soups, salads, sauces, breads and desserts. In addition, squash are high in vitamins and fiber, and low in sodium and calories. Squash are also inexpensive and easy to prepare.

There are two groups of squash—summer and winter—although many squash are now available year-round. The two families share similar physical characteristics. Summer squash have tender skin, few seeds, moist flesh and rapid cooking times. Winter squash have hard-shelled skins, low moisture content and long shelf lives.

Summer squash

Summer squash include dark green zucchini, pale green patty pans, yellow sunburst patty pans, yellow crooknecks and straightnecks, and the gnarled, pear-shaped chayotes (or christophenes). All of the summer squash are interchangeable within recipes. Squash can be prepared without peeling or blanching, although larger squash have more seeds and a tougher skin.

Zucchini is the best known summer squash and is available year-round. Patty pans are gaining in popularity. Shaped like flying saucers, patty pans can be stuffed, shredded, or julienned and sauteed. Sunburst patty pans are hybrids of zucchini and patty pan, and exhibit a golden yellow color with a splash of green.

Chayote is a relative newcomer on the American cooking scene, but has a wide international resume. Chayotes are prevalent in Latin America, the Caribbean and Indonesia—as well as in Louisiana, where they are known as mirliton. Chayotes are mildly flavored, crisp and firm—ideal for stir-frying and sauteing. The larger vegetables must be peeled and require a longer cooking time. Like patty pans, chayotes can be baked and stuffed for an elegant side dish.

Fresh herbs such as oregano, basil, tarragon, thyme and dill enhance the mild, cucumber-like flavor of summer squash. For a simple side dish, saute an assortment of julienned summer squash with cherry tomatoes, red onion, asparagus and fresh herbs. Summer squash make a light filling for omelets, a topping for pizza and a skewer companion for sizzling kabobs. Dark-skinned squash can be added to pancakes and crepes for added color, texture and flavor. Squash can be shredded for a salad garnish; chopped for soups and stews; or combined with carrots for light breads, muffins and cakes.

Choose summer squash with a taut and glossy skin, firm flesh and no blemishes. Loosely wrapped squash can be stored in the refrigerator for about a week.

Winter squash

Winter squash include dark green acorn squash; tan, cello-shaped butternut squash; yellow spaghetti squash (or vegetable squash); elephantine, greenish-blue hubbard squash; turban-shaped gold or green buttercup squash; a variety of Japanese kabochas; golden nuggets; and large tan or green-striped calabazas. Also in the winter squash family are a variety of pumpkins, including jack-o-lanterns, sugar pie and miniature jack-be-littles (or munchkins).

Pumpkin is one of the most underrated and misunderstood squash. Although canned pumpkin is widely available, fresh pumpkin is rarely contemplated for culinary purposes. True, some fresh pumpkins are destined for the Thanksgiving pumpkin pie, but most are carved into Halloween ornaments with ghoulish faces.

Yet pumpkins radiate a mild, sweet potato-like flavor and texture, and meld well into sauces and soups. Pumpkins are loaded with vitamins (especially beta carotene) and minerals, yet are low in calories and sodium. Pasta primavera with pumpkin sauce, chicken with pumpkin coconut sauce, and pumpkin-apple soup have been popular autumn specials at my restaurant. Perhaps what pumpkins need is a good public relations firm.

Calabaza (or West Indian pumpkin) adds exotic allure to the menu. Similar to the jack-o-lantern, calabazas are extremely large with a bright orange, sweet flesh. Calabaza is often sold in wedges in Latin American and Caribbean markets. Island seasonings such as allspice, nutmeg, thyme, ginger and chili peppers enhance the flavor of calabaza.

In the asylum of squash, spaghetti squash is one of the more eccentric members. When cooked, the flesh separates into pasta-like strands. This phenomenon has inspired an array of spin-offs from classic pasta recipes: for example, spreading parmesan cheese and garlic butter over roasted squash or tossing the strands with cream and egg for squash alfredo. For an Asian-style salad, chill the cooked vegetable and combine the strands with soy sauce, ginger, garlic, sesame oil, lime juice, scallions and broccoli. For a twist in presentation, serve the squash dishes in the shell.

Preparing winter squash sometimes daunts even the most seasoned chef. Most recipes require winter squash to be boiled, baked or microwaved ahead of time. To boil squash, remove the skin with a vegetable peeler or paring knife, cut in half, scoop out the seeds and coarsely chop the flesh. Cook the squash as you would potatoes—bring the water to a boil, drop the chopped squash into the water and cook for about 10 to 12 minutes, until the squash is tender. Drain the squash in a colander and cool under running water.

To roast squash, cut the squash in half, remove the seeds and place the squash flesh side down in the pan with about one-half inch of water. Bake at 375° for 40 to 50 minutes, or until the flesh is tender. Squash can also be microwaved in 10 to 15 minutes.

Winter squash are easily pureed into creamy bisques and sauces. The basic puree consists of a savory combination of squash, onion, ginger, garlic and fresh herbs. The smooth texture of pureed squash also inspires a variety of pies, muffins and ice creams. Nuts and dried fruit make tasty accompaniments to squash desserts. Pumpkin-nut muffins, butternut squash–date bread, and acorn and rum-raisin ice cream will make splashy appearances on the dessert menu.

WEST INDIAN SQUASH BISQUE

Serves 6 to 8

Ingredients:
1 Tbs. butter
1 medium-sized onion, diced
1 cup celery, diced
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 chili pepper, seeded and minced (optional)
1 Tbs. fresh ginger, minced
4 cups calabaza, pumpkin, butternut or acorn squash, peeled and diced
4 cups water
2 cups coconut milk
¼ cup rum
1 Tbs. cumin
2 tspns. ground coriander
1 tspn. thyme
½ tspn. ground allspice
½ tspn. salt
½ tspn. black pepper
¼ tspn. white pepper

Method:
In a large saucepan, melt the butter. Add the onion, celery, garlic, chili pepper and ginger. Saute over medium heat for 5 to 7 minutes, until the vegetables are soft. Place the pumpkin and water in the pan and cook for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Reduce the heat and add the coconut milk, rum, cumin, coriander, thyme, allspice, salt, and black and white pepper. Cook for another 5 to 7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the soup is steaming. Transfer the soup to a food processor fitted with a steel blade and process for 15 to 20 seconds, forming a bisque. Pour immediately into soup bowls.

—Courtesy of Jay Solomon
Jay's Cafe at Clinton Hall

Nutritional information per serving:
301 calories, 4 grams protein, 24 grams carbohydrate, 22 grams fat, 240 mg. sodium, 5 mg. cholesterol

Versatile winter squash can be made into light fritters and pancakes, can be tossed with rice pilaf, and can be added to stews or stuffings. Acorn, buttercup and kabocha squash can be halved, baked, and stuffed like a potato.

Buying and merchandising

Choose winter squash that feel heavy, with firm skin that is free of blemishes or tender spots. Winter squash can be stored in a cool, dry and well-ventilated area for several weeks. Once cut, however, the squash should be refrigerated and used within a few days.

Merchandising squash is easy when the specific squash is mentioned in the name of the dish. Calabaza squash bisque sounds more appealing than squash soup, and chicken with butternut-squash puree is more enticing than squash sauce. As always, it's a good idea to introduce the dish with mouth-watering descriptions: savory, salubrious, succulent, sensual—well, you don't have to go that far.

Squash are no longer waiting by the phone for a call, any call. The time for squash to join the team of nouvelle cuisine has come. ❑

PUMPKIN RICE

Serves 6 to 8

Ingredients:
2 Tbs. butter, melted
1 onion, diced
2 cups pumpkin, calabaza, butternut or acorn squash, peeled and diced
1 chili pepper, seeded and minced
4 to 6 garlic cloves, minced
1 Tbs. fresh ginger, minced
2 Tbs. curry powder
1 tspn. cumin
½ tspn. ground clove
½ tspn. ground allspice
½ tspn. black pepper
½ tspn. salt
4 cups water
2 cups rice
2 cups fresh kale or spinach, chopped

Method:
Add the butter, onion, pumpkin, chili pepper, garlic and ginger to a saucepan and saute for 7 to 10 minutes, or until the vegetables are soft. Add the seasonings and simmer for 1 minute more.

Add the water, rice and kale, and simmer over medium heat for 25 to 30 minutes, or until the rice is fluffy. Serve immediately.

—Courtesy of Jay Solomon
Jay's Cafe at Clinton Hall

Nutritional information per serving:
363 calories, 8 grams protein, 72 grams carbohydrate, 5 grams fat, 242 mg. sodium, 10 mg. cholesterol

Jay Solomon is the chef and owner of Jay's Cafe at Clinton Hall in Ithaca, New York.

AFTERNOON T·E·A

Brewing up new business for the late-afternoon lull

by Melanie A. Crosby

As hot summer days fade into the crispness of fall and winter, nothing hits the spot quite like a steaming cup of afternoon tea, topped off with a taste (or several tastes) of something sweet. Soothing orange pekoe, smoky Lapsang Souchong or spicy Darjeeling may be the perfect recipe to warm the day and quell those late afternoon hunger pangs.

This time-honored tradition of afternoon tea—a tradition of scones and cream, china pots and silver spoons—has been enjoyed in Britain for generations, and America is now taking a liking to it as well. Foodservice operators are beginning to cash in on this growing taste for tea. Many have discovered the rewards of offering afternoon tea, filling empty seats as well as customers' empty tummies. Traditional tea time (usually between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m.) is traditional restaurant downtime.

The tea tradition

It was not until the late 1700s that the taking of afternoon tea became fashionable. In 18th-century England, breakfast was large and hearty, lunch was small, and dinner was served late in the evening (around 8 or 9 o'clock), especially during the longer days of summer. Anna, Duchess of Bedford, is credited with launching the afternoon tea "habit." She would grow hungry in the late afternoon and, with supper still hours away, would order up a pot of tea along with breads, cakes and tarts to tide her over. The Duchess soon invited her friends to share her small repast, and afternoon tea became *de rigueur* for ladies of society.

One tea-time note: Afternoon tea should not be confused with "high tea." Although equally British, the evening event is a much different kind of repast. The heartier high tea includes not only sweets and tea, but hot, savory dishes and meat and fish offerings. Just as elegant afternoon tea became fashionable with the upper classes, high tea found favor with the working classes. Served later in the day (around 5 p.m. or 6 p.m.), it was (and is) often the biggest meal of the day after a hard day's work.

Hotel teas concentrate on correctness

Four Seasons Hotel in Philadelphia began serving afternoon tea when it opened in 1983. Served in the intimate Swann Lounge, tea takers can overlook fountains from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

The hotel's spokesperson, Ruth Hirshey, describes the Four Seasons' tea as elegant, sophisticated and "very correct. It's much more British than American in style," she says. "Proper service is vitally important."

Tea tables are dressed with Swiss lace cloths and fine British china. The tea's three courses include finger sandwiches, fresh warm scones (plain and currant) with rich Devonshire cream, and a selection of pastries, in-

Courtesy of Thomas J. Lipton Company

cluding "wonderful fruit tarts," which Hirshey claims are a highlight of the tea service. All items are made fresh daily in the hotel's own pastry kitchen.

At Four Seasons, the staff concentrates on educating customers about the manners and myths of afternoon tea. "We especially stress the difference between afternoon tea and high tea," says Hirshey.

Correctness and propriety are also important at the elegant afternoon tea served at The Cincinnatian Hotel in Cincinnati. The hotel began offering its tea three years ago with great—and continuing—success. "It's gotten to the point where you have to have a reservation to guarantee getting tea," says Anne Keeling, director of marketing for The Cincinnatian.

At this 149-room European-style hotel in downtown Cincinnati, afternoon tea is served in the Cricket Lounge every weekday afternoon from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. The service is based on the elegant afternoon tea served at The Dorchester Hotel in London. The Cincinnatian's fixed-price ($9.50) tea includes selections in each of the traditional three courses: three miniature tea sandwiches, two currant scones or tea breads, and two sweets (tea cookies, miniature tarts and pastries), plus a pot of freshly brewed loose-leaf tea. Service and setting are proper and elegant. Silver sparkles on tables, and classical guitar music lingers in the background.

Although the spread is quite British in flavor, the hotel's executive chef Anita Cunningham blends the traditional with a contemporary American twist, filling sandwiches with sumptuous delicacies such as smoked salmon and dill mousse, or cucumber and herb cream cheese. "The culinary effort for afternoon tea is very similar to that of a team of artists; we make items as appealing to the eye as they are to the taste," says Cunningham.

Restaurants take an informal turn on tea

Although traditionally afternoon tea can be quite formal, some restaurant operators have discovered that it doesn't always have to be. They have

loosened the constraints a bit, without losing the manners or the mystique.

Anglers & Writers, a small neighborhood restaurant in New York City's West Village, has found a comfortable niche between elegant formality and comfortable casualization. "We serve the same [type of offerings] as the British, but I hate the formality of proper British tea," says co-owner Craig Bero. "This is very informal and relaxed. We're very American about it." Each table is allowed an hour and 45 minutes per seating, giving tea takers ample time for relaxed, lingering conversation as afternoon turns into evening.

Tea at Anglers & Writers is served daily between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. for a fixed price of $10 (quite a bargain by New York City standards). The three courses and a pot are a hearty helping, making this tea more of a meal than an afternoon snack. "This is not a dainty tea," says Bero. "It's an early dinner, and it's a good value for the price."

The first course consists of "scones of the day," which vary with the seasons. Midsummer menus may include currant scones; fall is more likely to bring pumpkin scones. The fresh scones are served with homemade preserves, sweet butters and clotted cream. Bero scorns the "hockey puck" scones other restaurants may serve; at his cafe, scones are baked in 10-inch pie pans and cut into wedges. "Our customers are served wedges of scone at least 3 inches high," he says.

Anglers & Writers' second tea course is the traditional sandwich plate—with a twist. Offerings may include such offbeat delicacies as goose pate on toasted sourdough or Scandinavian seafood salad on homemade dill bread. Sandwiches are served open-faced in the Danish style.

The third and final course is, of course, reserved for the sweet tooth and often takes the form of cookies. "It's usually whatever we happen to have that day," says Bero, "but it always includes shortbread and a lemon square."

At Anglers & Writers, as at the more elaborate hotel teas, tea accompaniments and serviceware are vitally important to the total experience—and they are just as eclectic as the menu. The restaurant serves crystallized rock sugar instead of granulated, as well as wildflower and cherry blossom honey instead of processed honey. The repast is served on mismatched antique German and English china that Bero has collected over the years, and all doilies and tea cosies that decorate the tables are made by hand.

"Americans are not that familiar with tea service," says Bero. "We have to spend time on it because we're educating our customers. We pay special attention to the little things." Those little things include using a special filtering system that brings the water as close as possible to spring water, which, with its balance of minerals, brews a perfect pot of tea. Bero is careful to heat the pots first, then adds the tea, and then just-boiling water. The leaves are steeped just long enough to maximize the flavor. Tea takers are also presented with a second pot of water to dilute their tea as they please.

The Willson Walker House restaurant in Lexington, Virginia, has also found a nice niche between British formality and American comfort. This 90-seat upscale restaurant located in a restored colonial home in a small Southern town serves tea only on Wednesday afternoons between 3 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Chef Esther Durham describes the Willson Walker House's afternoon tea as "more American than British, more casual and relaxed." Tea service is set up in the foyer of the grand

> "We've taken a dead time and turned it into one of our most lucrative time periods."
> —*Craig Bero*
> *Anglers & Writers*

Brewing a perfect pot

The details of style and taste are very important to a successful afternoon tea service. Nothing is more central to that service than the tea itself. Here are some tips to keep in mind when brewing a pot.

1. Start with cold water. Let the water run for a bit before filling the kettle. This increases the water's oxygen content, which brings out the tea's flavors.

2. Heat the water just to boiling. Overboiling results in a loss of oxygen and can produce flat tea. Water that has not yet boiled may not be hot enough to open the tea leaves enough to produce high flavor.

3. Warm the pot. A cold teapot will cool the water on impact, reducing flavor. You can warm the pot by flushing it with a little hot water. Empty that water, place loose leaves in the warmed pot, pour just-boiling water over the leaves to fill the pot, and cover.

4. Allow the tea to steep just long enough. Tea should be brewed for 3 to 5 minutes, depending on the size of the leaves. Too little time will result in weak tea, as the leaves are not given a chance to open completely and release their flavor. Too much time can produce bitter tea due to the release of tannin.

5. Avoid aluminum or tin teapots. Metallic teapots can give the tea a metallic taste and may taint the color.

6. Add the milk first. If customers take their tea with milk, the milk should be poured into the cup before the tea. This may make it difficult to determine the right amount, however. Use milk rather than cream or half-and-half, as these heavier dairy products can cover up the flavor of the tea.

7. Provide a second pot of hot water. This allows patrons to dilute their tea to suit their own tastes.

house. Patrons are seated by a hostess and offered their choice of tea or coffee. The afternoon's sweet treats, which vary from week to week, are laid out on gleaming silver trays, and customers can help themselves to as much as they wish. Offerings may include scones with an assortment of jellies, mini-muffins and cookies, all made by Durham.

Turnaround for downtime

These afternoon tea spreads may seem elaborate and expensive, but operators see it as a relatively simple way to bring in customers during the late-afternoon lull.

"Afternoon tea makes effective use of that in-between time when nothing much else is going on," says Four Seasons' Hirshey. The hotel tea, she says, "plays to a very appreciative audience" and serves an average of 30 people per day.

> "We see businesspeople bring in clients for tea instead of lunch."
>
> —*Anne Keeling, The Cincinnatian Hotel*

Bero claims he started his afternoon tea specifically to combat that slow afternoon period and has had great success. "We're constantly bustling here, and people will stop by and say, 'What's going on?' We've taken a dead time and turned it into one of our most lucrative time periods." Although the hot summer months are a little slower, during the season his small restaurant (15 tables seating 45) serves tea by reservation only, and it's booked solid. "You have to call several days in advance to get in," he says.

Anglers & Writers' tea often serves to introduce clientele to the other benefits the restaurant has to offer. "Our tea is a great form of advertising," says Bero, who has zero dollars in his advertising budget and is proud of it.

Afternoon tea is also relatively easy to develop and can be done inexpensively. Bero incorporates elements from his existing menu in lighter versions, and the service staff is already on the job. "During that downtime, the staff is usually just sitting around. Afternoon tea lets you use the staff you have on hand," says Bero.

Durham has her own strategy for making afternoon tea cost-effective. "We do only one day, self-service," she says. "Limiting the choices to one or two types of cookies and sandwiches can also eliminate the chance for a lot of waste."

Anne Keeling cautions that an elaborate tea may not be particularly inexpensive to offer, because it takes so much time to make the intricate miniature tea sandwiches and elegant pastries. She believes, however, the extra effort and expense is worth it. "We don't make a profit on it," she admits, "but it does bring in many different types of customers."

More than just ladies of leisure

Although afternoon tea was once believed to be the domain of middle-aged ladies of leisure, today's tea-time patrons are quite a varied breed.

Four Seasons' Hirshey says, "We get everyone from proper ladies in hats to family groups to business suits and briefcases." Bero's West Village clientele is also quite varied. Many health-conscious customers, he notes, are attracted to afternoon tea as opposed to coffee houses or happy hour.

Afternoon tea is also becoming appropriate for business meetings. "Tea is an afternoon outing," says Hirshey, "but it can also be a good time to talk business." The Cincinnatian's Keeling notes a definite upswing in business meetings over a pot of tea. "We see businesspeople bring in clients for tea instead of lunch," she says. "It's a cheaper alternative, of course, but it's also quieter, more relaxed. We see many creative types, such as advertising agents and their clients, holding business meetings over tea."

Many customers turn to afternoon tea to celebrate special occasions as well. Keeling says that baby showers have become common at the hotel's tea. "People may want to have a party but don't want to drink alcohol. They see tea as a nice alternative," she says. Durham says the Willson Walker House regularly plays host to a group of teachers on Wednesday afternoons after school. Four Seasons' afternoon tea has become popular for wedding showers, which can be set up in a private room with enough notice. "We also see more and more small receptions with tea service," says Hirshey, "such as a law firm welcoming a new associate."

Expanding afternoon tea

The growing popularity of tea receptions and parties has prompted some operators to sponsor their own promotions in conjunction with afternoon tea.

Four Seasons sponsored a children's tea this past Christmas season called "Tea Time in Wonderland." The tea was structured around an Alice in Wonderland theme and featured a local ballet troupe performing excerpts from the *Nutcracker* in addition to tea and goodies.

Christmas also means extended tea service at The Cincinnatian Hotel, due to the "larger number of people downtown for shopping and such," says Keeling. The hotel also organizes cross-promotions. A recent success involved Laura Ashley, the women's fashions retailer. The event combined afternoon tea with a fashion show to launch the retailer's new spring collection. "It was so popular that we're probably going to do it again with the fall collection," says Keeling.

Afternoon tea can be customized to include the best your restaurant has to offer in style, cuisine and service. If done right, afternoon tea can give your customers a relaxing break on a busy day and your business a pleasant boost on a slow afternoon. ❑

Melanie Crosby is managing editor of ***Restaurants USA.***

BOOKSTORE CAFES

Writing a new chapter in restaurants

by Jennifer Batty

Some restaurants are offering their customers something new to nibble on: words. Across the country, the bookstore cafe, a marriage of food for the soul and food for the body, is attracting customers to the unique atmosphere created by joining the two concepts.

Bookstore cafes exude an inviting warmth: the rich smell of books mingling with the aroma of food, the chance to nestle in a corner table with a cup of coffee and a book, or the chance to browse through the bookstore after contenting your stomach.

Kramerbooks & Afterwords Cafe in Washington DC.

Not every bookstore cafe has a happy ending, and even the success stories hit a plot twist now and then.

Chapter one: A tale of two concepts

The idea of opening a bookstore cafe had been brewing in Bill Kramer's mind since he was six or seven. When he was a child, his family would take weekend trips that included a stop in Baltimore, where his father would visit friends in the bookstore business. One of the those bookshops made a big impression on the young Bill Kramer.

"Peabody's was this dusty old bookshop with sawdust on the floor. In the back they sold sausages and beer. The owner set up the beer parlor in the back during the Depression," says Kramer. "I was very taken with the atmosphere there; it was always a treat for us to go to Peabody's."

This experience was "set on back burners bubbling away" in Kramer's mind until 1975 when he became one of the owners of Kramerbooks & Afterwords, a combination bookstore and restaurant in Washington DC.

Even though he was realizing a childhood dream, Kramer knew there were risks. "The only risks involved were those inherent in opening two of the most bankruptcy-prone businesses," he says dryly.

The operation has been packed from day one and remains that way. "We attract a broad clientele. Everybody feels at home. A lot of people end up here when they're out on dates or have friends in from out of town," he says. In fact, business is so good that Kramer plans to move into a larger building that will triple the business's current space.

"Actually, the combination of the bookstore and the cafe cancelled some of the risks involved in the two operations. It gave people multiple reasons to come," says Kramer.

Rupert LeCraw, president and owner of Oxford Books in Atlanta, had heard of operations with both a bookstore and a restaurant component, including Kramerbooks, and liked the idea. "It appealed to me because if you can get people into the store and offer them food and drink, it helps them relax and keeps them in the store longer. In the process you hope they'll buy books as well," says LeCraw. He opened up Oxford Books and the Cup and Chaucer Cafe about 10 years ago, and he added the Oxford Espresso Cafe to another bookstore location a year and half ago.

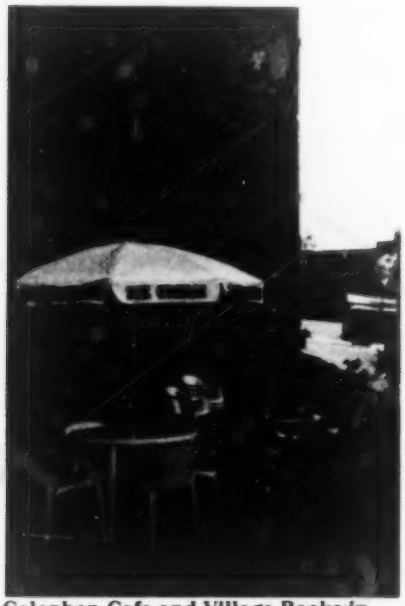
But he also learned that there were many glitches involved in running the combo. "Operating a bookstore and operating a cafe are completely different tasks. I would tell people in the bookselling business who are considering adding a cafe to decide whether they want the extra headaches," says LeCraw.

Chapter two: Great expectations

Despite the headaches, adding a restaurant onto a bookstore can boost business. "I thought adding a cafe might be a good way to change us into a unique place," says Marsha Berman, owner of Cover to Cover Bookstore Cafe in Columbia, Maryland.

Business doubled in her 10-year-old bookstore when the 50-seat cafe opened in 1988. "It seems that anybody who comes into the cafe goes into the bookstore afterwards," says Berman.

When the Colophon Cafe opened adjoining Chuck and Dee Robinson's Village Books in Bellingham, Washington, the bookstore saw an immediate increase in nighttime business. "Business went up 10 percent, then it shot up 40 percent and it's kept growing ever since the cafe opened," says Chuck Robinson. "It brought our regulars back here more often and drew in new people. Some people



Colophon Cafe and Village Books in Bellingham, Washington.

Davis-Kidd Booksellers and Second Story Cafe in Nashville, Tennessee.

come in to browse and go over for lunch. Then they'll come back one night for coffee and remember a book review they read, so they'll come over to the bookstore. It works out well, because the restaurant's best time for business is not necessarily the same as the bookstore's."

Chapter three: To own or not to own

"I knew from the start that the ideal situation would be to have someone else own and operate the cafe, someone with experience in the foodservice industry," says Robinson of Village Books.

Taimi and Ray Dunn were friends of the Robinsons who had previously operated pizza parlors and were looking for something "more fun." When the space beside the bookstore opened up in 1985, Robinson approached the Dunns, and they agreed to handle the restaurant half of the operation. The Dunns moved in next door, punched a hole through the connecting wall, and the Colophon Cafe was born. The Dunns own the restaurant outright.

"The way that we've done this suits our needs," says Robinson. "We aren't involved in the managing of the cafe; and they aren't involved in the bookstore. We have completely different staffs on each side. I would not have any interest in coming in and deciding what kind of soup we're going to have. I'm interested in books," says Robinson.

Communication is important when the operations are run by two different owners. "If you have two separate owners, nail down together what you want your staff to look like and act like. If you have one side's staff in tuxedos and the other's in jeans, you've got a problem. Customers don't like to be confused," says Taimi Dunn.

Diane Minor, who is now manager of the Second Story Cafe in Davis-Kidd Booksellers in Nashville, Tennessee, was previously human-resources manager for the bookstore for two years. She had prior experience in foodservice because she ran a catering business for a year. Upon taking the cafe position, she hired an assistant manager with a foodservice background to assist her.

The switch so far has worked out fine. "Both are a form of retail, but if you've bought food, you can't return it. Books you can. It is just a different style of retail," says Minor. The staffs for the bookstore and the cafe remain separate "unless we get into real trouble, and then we might ask them to help us, which they're quite willing to do," says Minor.

Chapter four: Books are not to be tasted

What type of food goes well with a good book or with shelves full of books? Foods that aren't fried, first of all. "We can't have anything that will emit substances that can get into the books—like fryers. We don't have a grill or a stove. We just have an oven for baking," says Colophon Cafe's Dunn.

When the Colophon Cafe first opened, the menu consisted of ice cream, dessert items, bagels, muffins and coffee. "People kept asking us to make lunch items, and that's when my husband Ray began making soup," says Dunn.

Ray Dunn began making one-pot soups, such as African Peanut Soup, and now the cafe has five different kinds of soup simmering in 12 pots each day. It also employs three bakers who bake all night long and produce pies, cakes and breads that are displayed in glass cases in the cafe.

Afterwords in Washington DC does not have a "real" kitchen, says Kramer. There's no hood or open flame, yet the cafe has progressed from soup and sandwiches to a full menu with fish and meat items.

"The atmosphere of the bookstore cafe seems to lend itself to bistro-style food," says Minor. "We attract professionals, students—generally an older, well-educated crowd that is eating healthier."

LeCraw has found that his customers also prefer lighter, simpler meals like soups, salads and quiche. The menu at Cover to Cover's cafe shows the California style of cooking, with the emphasis on nutritional foods. The Colophon Cafe also offers sandwiches, salads and other light fare.

Chapter five: As you like it

Bookstore cafes range from operations that give equal space for each concept to those that have only cozy nooks for an eating area or those that allot a smaller area for the book browsers.

Kramerbooks operates within a 1,000-square-foot space, while the cafe (including outdoor seating and an atrium) has 2,500 square feet. At Village Books and the Colophon Cafe, the bookstore has 6,000 square feet and the cafe 3,000. The 1,900-square-foot Second Story Cafe is nestled in a corner of the 18,000-square-foot Davis-Kidd bookstore.

The size of the restaurants reflects their purpose in the overall operations, say the owners. "The cafe was added as a complement to the bookstore. It does better than break even—we're in the black—but we were never expected to be the prime money-maker," says Minor of Second Story Cafe.

On the contrary, both sides of Kramer's operation are expected to pull their weight. "There are times when one does better than the other. They were created to run as separate profit centers, and they are about even in terms of revenue," says Kramer. In 1990, Kramerbooks & Afterwords took in $2.5 million.

Luring customers from one side of a bookstore cafe to the other is not too great a challenge, say the owners, since the browsing atmosphere of the bookstore and the aromas wafting from the cafe naturally encourage cross-flow. But to emphasize the close association between the two, Berman holds book events like author signings and book discussion groups in Cover to Cover. She has worked book-related names into the menu as well, like Moby Dick Tuna Sandwich and the Sherlock Burger.

Minor uses her experience in the bookstore to think up creative promotions for the Second Story Cafe. She has held author signings and cookbook signings, with menu specials prepared from recipes in the cookbooks. Books are kept in the cafe for customers to read, and *New York Times* book reviews are available on the tables. Flyers on the tables tell people what new books are in the bookstore.

The cafe caters to young readers by sponsoring breakfasts with Madeline and the Berenstain Bears. "We have people dressed up like the characters who read the stories to the children. We've had 100-150 people turn up for these breakfast events," says Minor.

Dunn says that giving the staff members of both Village Books and the Colophon Cafe some knowledge about how the other half operates helps to encourage customers to cross the dividing line. "We give the bookstore staff 30 percent off on our food so they are able to talk intelligently about the food. Our staff gets 30 percent off in the bookstore, so they become familiar with the bookstore and can point customers to an area where a book might be located. Or they can offer an opinion about a book they just read," says Dunn.

With all the back and forth, how do the owners deal with the issue of books wandering into the cafe and food finding its way into the bookstore? "It's never been a huge issue. We have a sign posted telling people to purchase books before taking them into the cafe, but it's never been a big problem," says Kramer.

"We've never discouraged people from walking around with coffee cups or food in the bookstore. We just ask them to be careful," says Robinson of Village Books.

Customers are encouraged to take books into the Second Story Cafe whether they have bought them or ever intend to buy them. "People sit down with their coffee and read the books, and they might decide to buy four books instead of two after looking them over. We encourage people to linger and read," says Minor.

Lingering over a cup of coffee and a book is fine for slow times, but during the afternoon or evening rush, cafe operators may have to give dawdlers a gentle push.

"We're so busy now that people don't feel comfortable reading for a long time and tying up a table. Sometimes when we're busy, we'll seat people together to allow them to read longer while others still make use of the table. But we will ask them politely to leave if they aren't buying anything and they have been using the table for a long time," says Dunn.

Chapter six: The right stuff

"Bookstore cafes are a very hot idea at this point, but you need to research the idea carefully. You can't just jump into it," says Robinson of Village Books.

Location should be a big consideration when deciding to open a bookstore cafe, says Kramer. "We chose Dupont Circle [a fashionable neighborhood in Washington DC] because it has a high density of daytime office traffic and a high density of residential traffic. You have to know the dynamics of the neighborhood when you move in, and that will guide your choice of menu items as well as books," says Kramer.

Adequate capital is also a must before venturing into the bookstore cafe industry. "It would be very wise for someone interested in opening a bookstore cafe to make a trip to a successful operation. Talk to the owners and have them give you the start-up costs and tell you about the unexpected expenses they have incurred," says Minor of Second Story Cafe.

"Things always look easier than they are. All you have to do is look at the number of restaurant failures—and then right behind them are bookstores. It seems like absolute folly to put the two together," says Robinson. "But if you can package the idea correctly, you have two of the things that people will never tire of doing: eating and reading." ❑

THE END

Jennifer Batty is a communications specialist at the National Restaurant Association.

CONDUCTING MEETINGS

Stuart Armstrong

Do you and your employees waste time in meetings that aren't productive when you should be making beautiful music (or food) together? Maybe you need to brush up on the fundamentals of conducting meetings. And maybe you don't need some of those meetings at all.

by Wolf J. Rinke

When I ask foodservice managers to name their biggest time wasters, I'm almost always told: meetings and paperwork. If you, too, have the problem of wasting time in meetings, then this article is for you. You'll learn how to structure meetings and what specific strategies to use to make your meetings more productive.

Do we need this meeting?

Before you start any meeting, always begin by asking, "Do we need this meeting?" and, if so, "What is the purpose of this meeting?" The answer to the first question is frequently a resounding NO.

One foodservice organization that I have been associated with for years conducts a staff meeting every morning, Monday through Friday. It starts at about 8 a.m. (unless the boss is late) and usually is over by about 9 a.m. (unless the boss has something more urgent to do or has what he thinks is a neat story to share with the group). The irony is that it doesn't matter how many or how few things need to be discussed or how critical the issues are, the meeting almost always takes one hour. Also, the truly important or complex issues are often brought up at the end of the meeting. In that case, quite a bit of time is spent discussing the issue, the time runs out, and everyone departs with the boss saying something like, "Let's talk about it some more" or "Let's all work on this." Sound familiar? If it does, then you already know that neither instruction will result in action.

Furthermore, if you ask any of the participants why the meeting was conducted, you would get a variety of answers, with at least one person telling you, "We always have a daily staff meeting" or "We have always done it this way." As a result of having spent a considerable portion of my working life in meetings (too many meetings), I know that this pattern is not at all unusual.

Meetings should be the exception, not the rule. But how many are too many? I think that a good rule of thumb is that if you spend more than 20 percent of your time in meetings, you or your organization has a problem.

Just to set the record straight, I don't believe that meetings are bad per se. In fact, they can result in many positive outcomes, such as

- □ enhancing team spirit
- □ sharing the organizational vision
- □ improving information flow
- □ gaining greater accuracy in communication
- □ increasing participation
- □ generating greater acceptance and ownership of ideas

Unfortunately, meetings, compared to individual decision-making, memos, telephone calls and other strategies that require only one or two individuals, also have some disadvantages. Most meetings are

- □ expensive
- □ time-consuming
- □ habit-forming
- □ disruptive
- □ ineffective
- □ unproductive
- □ boring

Before the meeting

Let's assume that you have already determined that a meeting is the best way to accomplish what you need to do.

First you must figure out who should attend the meeting so that you can accomplish the purpose efficiently and effectively. My experience has taught me that most meetings have too many, instead of too few, attendees. But how many is too many? That depends on the type and purpose of the meeting. If the purpose is information-sharing, then all those who must have firsthand knowledge should be present. The importance of the information to be disseminated will also help you decide. If the information affects people personally and their correct understanding is critical to the organization's welfare, then I would plan on firsthand dissemination instead of relying on the grapevine. Case in point: when you must lay off a certain number of your employees. On the other hand, if the information is nice to know, such as the news that new dining room furniture is being purchased, you need have only the first-line supervisors attend, because they can disseminate

the information in their meetings; any misinterpretations will not have any serious consequences.

If the purpose of the meeting is to generate innovative ideas on how to better serve your customers, then the more attendees the merrier. However, once you have come up with lots of ideas and are ready to select the best alternative, it is time to restrict your group size to those who are critical in the implementation process—ideally, five to seven people. If you have a problem that needs fixing, then only those who can help fix the problem should be at the meeting.

Next you have to determine the agenda. Hold on, I can hear you groaning. Yes, I do believe in agendas. I make one up for every meeting. Do I make up a formal agenda that is distributed in advance for every meeting? No. In other words, if you are conducting an informal staff meeting, you should know what it is you hope to accomplish and should relate that to all the attendees as the first order of business. In this case you would not need to write it down for advance distribution. But if it is an important meeting, or a meeting of an organization that meets only infrequently, it is the only way—well, at least the most direct way—to travel.

The agenda should, if possible, be sent out in advance and include as a minimum the following information:

- title of meeting
- objectives
- date
- location
- starting and ending times

In the body of the agenda you should include the following information about each item:

- start/stop time
- description
- presenters
- material to be reviewed in advance
- expected outcome

The last item, which basically addresses why we are bothering to talk about this and what we want to come up with, is the most important item in the agenda.

During the meeting

Just when you thought it was safe to go back into meetings, here come some more instructions. Well, who ever told you that being a winning foodservice manager was going to be easy? Actually, running the meeting is the fun part. The analogy that I like to use is that of conducting an orchestra. Well, maestro, let's see what you need to do to get everyone to make music together.

Start and stop the meeting on time. You can tell that this one is important. Winning foodservice managers know that it is important to reward positive behavior. If B.F. Skinner can teach pigeons to dance, you can certainly teach your team members to act in accordance with your expectations.

When you start a meeting on time, you are telling the attendees that you value your time and theirs and that you are here to conduct some important business.

When you wait for latecomers, you are punishing those who knocked themselves out to make it to the meeting on time. At the same time, the stragglers get rewarded because, as soon as they walk in, the meeting starts. You are also sending the message that you are running a country club. The bottom line is that this behavior and perception will pervade the entire meeting and, beyond that, the entire organization. So, whenever you ask anyone to give you a part of their valuable life, start and stop on time.

Maintain a positive, enthusiastic, energetic climate. Meeting climates are not born, they are made, and you as the meeting leader create the climate. Our perceptions are our reality. So, during your next meeting, be enthusiastic. Some of your people will leave the meeting with positive feelings; some will even be excited.

Do first things first. The rationale for this rule is that people get tired. So, while everyone is fresh, get the heavy-duty stuff out of the way first. Leave the nice-to-have information for the end.

Stick to the agenda. I know that Jim likes to chat, but your job as the conductor is to get everyone to make music together, not just listen to Jim. Stick to each portion of the agenda. I know that's tough. After all, what do you do when you come to a controversial, complex or sensitive subject? Refer it to a committee. That's right. Get a subgroup to volunteer to work on it, outside the meeting. You see, big groups—those larger than nine people—don't lend themselves well to this kind of stuff. So do everyone a favor, and don't work on Mission Impossible.

Summarize. Conclude the meeting by highlighting the positive accomplishments of the group. Even though you thought that Jim and Mary were going to kill each other during the meeting, make sure that everyone leaves on a positive note. Also, make sure that everyone clearly knows who will do what by when. None of this "let's all work on it" business. It doesn't work, it never has, it never will. If you need to meet again, don't forget to establish the next meeting time and place.

After the meeting

Distribute minutes. You must distribute some sort of written statement that clearly establishes who will do what, when and where. If you don't want to call this piece of paper minutes, be my guest. By the way, do it as soon as possible after the meeting and don't forget to have the action person report back to the group, or at least to you. If this is a very important meeting or a formal organizational meeting, you'd better keep minutes, or you'll regret it later.

Evaluate. You may wish to conduct a formal evaluation, which means you do it on paper and send the results to the person above you in the organizational hierarchy. If the majority of the attendees feel that the time spent in the meeting was not worth the cost, figure out what to change so that the next meeting is more cost-effective and productive.

And remember, nothing prolongs a meeting as much as hard heads and soft chairs. ❑

Wolf J. Rinke, Ph.D., is president of Wolf Rinke Associates, Inc., a training and management consulting company in Rockville, Maryland. This article was excerpted from his book The Winning Foodservice Manager: Strategies For Doing More With Less. *Copyright 1990 by Wolf J. Rinke.*

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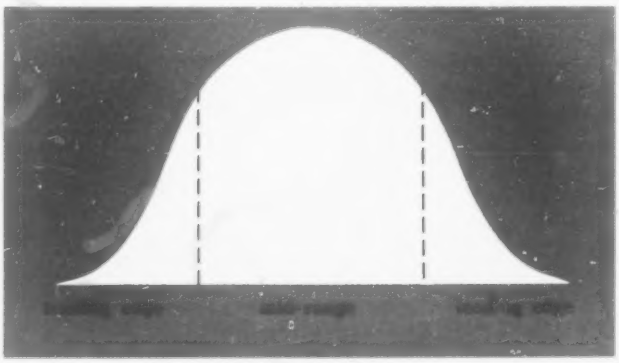
How to be an ineffective leader

Most everyone is aware of the statistical concept known as "the bell curve." This is the concept that suggests that when any given group of people is measured for any given purpose, the distribution of results will form a curve that will indicate there will be a few people at the extremes (extremely good or extremely bad) and that the largest proportion of the group will fall on the up slope or the down slope of a middle range. The curve resembles a bell—hence its name—and it looks like this.



If we apply the concept of the bell curve to the concept of leadership, we know that there are strong, responsible leaders; there are "average" or middling leaders; and there are weak, ineffective leaders. You really need to be thankful that these weak, ineffective leaders exist, as that causes you to be spotted to their right on the curve, and it's desirable to be as far to the right on the curve as you can be when leadership qualities are measured. Well, of course, considerable attention has been paid to how to be an effective leader, but there is not much in the literature about how to be an ineffective leader. After all, you have to have people in the bottom half in order for the top half to be possible. In the spirit of redressing this imbalance, here are some solid principles that can help you become a truly ineffective leader.

1. Cultivate distrust. You can easily achieve this by being secretive and deceptive, by encouraging and spreading rumors, by telling half-truths and whole lies, by omitting information that should be included and by including information that should be omitted in various reports and presentations. You can create internal dissension and corporate intrigue by issuing contradictory statements, applying policies inconsistently, making rash and abrupt judgements, and fostering an organizational culture that places people at the bottom of the priority list.

2. Provide shortsightedness. Always do what is expedient, not necessarily what's right, and live and work for today, with a constant focus on the past. Resist change and don't pay attention to new technology, since the old ways are always the best ways. Prevent others from envisioning the future, as such exercises are whimsical, subjective and ephemeral. Avoid risk and fear the unknown. Reject suggestions for improvement and stay only with what you yourself can see, hear, touch, taste and smell. Never hire a consultant. Praise and reward organizational myopia.

3. Eliminate standards. Or never establish them in the first place. If you had standards and people met them, they were set too low in the first place. If you set them too high and people did not reach them, such lofty standards would be ignored and mocked. So just avoid the time and trouble of setting standards, training employees and monitoring for employee compliance. Instead of standards, erect barriers in all aspects of management, such as operations, quality assurance, communication and human resources. Barriers blunt initiative and progress, but can be made to look like standards for the sake of appearance.

4. Solve others' problems. Create problems if you have to, so you can demonstrate your competence at solving them. If they already exist, just wade right in, make a cut-and-dried fast decision (that shows decisiveness) and then move right on to the next problem. Your people will appreciate that, since they won't have to work things out for themselves, which will save them time, agony and stress. Don't delegate and don't hold others accountable. You are ultimately accountable anyway, so you might as well do everything yourself.

5. Be closed-minded and rigid. Realize that you got to that leadership position because you exhibited something, somewhere, somehow that no one else had at the time, and therefore your leadership position fell to you. That makes you special. Therefore, don't listen to subordinates (who are, by implication, not special), as they don't have the perspective or responsibility that you do. You are your own person, not to be influenced, cajoled or impacted by anyone else in your organization. If you think it, it's got to be right (and special). Allowing others to sway your thinking is a weakness, isn't it? Also, never change your mind, irrespective of changed circumstances or new information. You don't want a reputation of being a vacillator, do you?

6. Be authoritarian. However you got to your leadership position (elected, appointed, self-developed), your stature vests you with authority, be it from a legal decree, corporate charter, certification of an election, etc. Since you have authority, you must act like you have it and are using it. In short, you need to be an authoritarian in terms of management style. Forget all other theories, such as x, y, z, and all other buzzwords, such as participative management and consensus seeking. You don't want to be known as namby-pamby or wishy-washy, sensibly sensitive, conditionally compassionate or earnestly empathetic. Be ruthlessly authoritarian.

7. Be humorless. On occasion you have to step back a bit and get a larger view of the situation in its total context so you can be exceptionally critical of and derisively demeaning to your subordinates. Leadership (you) and followership (them) is ultra-serious business, and you can be exemplary in conveying this to your people if you are morose, furtive, suspicious, caustic and acidic. A smile can be misunderstood, but frowns instill fear in people and are always understood.

8. Take all credit and blame others. When things go right, take all the credit. After all, it's due singularly to your leadership. When things go wrong, disassociate yourself as fast as you can from the situation by making excuses placing the blame on others. By placing blame on as many of your subordinates as possible, you are really helping them, since it is in their developmental best interest to get the feel of pressure, heat and unfairness. That will toughen them up, and they will thank you for it. Appreciation should rise upwards in your organization, funneling it all toward you. Depreciation should run downwards in your structure, moving away from you.

Fisher's Law #121: If you follow these principles, you will be on a bell curve edge of leadership effectiveness (never mind which edge).

Higher expenses dampen full-menu restaurant profits

Restaurant profits were held down at full-menu tableservice establishments in 1990 by escalating expenses—especially payroll, benefits and occupancy costs. This special analysis focuses on establishments that participated in the National Restaurant Association Industry Operations Survey and that reported operating data for two consecutive years.

Percent changes in revenues and expenses at full-menu tableservice restaurants 1990 versus 1989

Total sales per seat increased 6 percent at full menu-tableservice restaurants

	Percent change*
Total sales	6%
Total cost of sales	5
Other income	2
Total income	1
Total controllable expenses	6
☐ Payroll	7
☐ Employee benefits	7
☐ Direct operating expenses	−1
☐ Music and entertainment	22
☐ Advertising and promotion	12
☐ Utilities	3
☐ Administrative and general	0
☐ Repairs and maintenance	6
Total occupancy costs	8
☐ Rent	7
☐ Property taxes	9
☐ Other taxes	17
☐ Property insurance	4

**All percent change figures are based upon median dollar amounts per seat and are not intended to be representative of or to set standards for the industry. Respondents providing two years of comparable data numbered 424. Number of respondents varies by line item.*

Source: National Restaurant Association, 1991 Restaurant Industry Operations Survey

Total median payroll costs per seat at full-menu tableservice restaurants jumped 7 percent in 1990, according to a special analysis of the results of the 1991 National Restaurant Association Industry Operations Survey, conducted in cooperation with the national accounting firm Deloitte & Touche.

Median employee benefits expenses per seat grew by a similarly strong 7 percent. Occupancy costs were up a higher 8 percent. In comparison, total median sales per seat among full-menu tableservice survey participants increased 6 percent in 1990. Consequently, median restaurant profit as a percent of total sales edged downward slightly, from 4.7 percent in 1989 to 4.6 percent in 1990.

Payroll expenses grow

Among a restaurant's controllable expenses, which include payroll, benefits, advertising and repair/maintenance costs, payroll is the largest cost category. Between 1989 and 1990, full-menu tableservice survey respondents reported a 7 percent increase in median payroll costs per seat: from $1,597 to $1,708. On a ratio-to-total-sales basis, payroll expenses in 1990 captured 29.3 percent of the total full-menu tableservice sales dollar, up from 28.9 percent in 1989. It is likely that these higher payroll costs reflect an increase in the federal minimum wage that occurred in April 1990.

Costs of employee benefits, which includes employer Social Security (FICA) taxes on tips as well as workers' compensation and health-insurance premiums, also rose sharply between 1989 and 1990 at full-menu tableservice restaurants. In 1989, median benefits costs per seat were $196 (4.1 percent of sales), but advanced to $210 (4.3 percent of sales) in 1990.

Other notable expense changes reported by full-menu tableservice respondents between 1989 and 1990 include

☐ *Increased advertising and promotion costs.* Full-menu tableservice respondents indicated that spending on advertising and promotion increased on a per seat and ratio-to-total-sales basis between 1989 and 1990. In 1989, median advertising and promotional costs were $98 per seat, but advanced to $110 per seat in 1990. In addition, median music and entertainment expenses per seat jumped 22 percent. These higher spending levels are probably related to the onset of the recession in 1990 and the heightened need to use advertising/promotions and music/entertainment to bolster business in an uncertain economic climate.

Survey respondents reported a 7 percent increase in median payroll costs per seat to $1,708 in 1990.

☐ *Higher occupancy costs.* Restaurant occupancy costs, which include rent, property taxes and property insurance, continued to rise for full-menu tableservice operators in 1990. Median total occupancy costs per seat were $382 in 1990, up almost 8 percent from 1989. The median rent expense per seat advanced more than 7 percent during the same period, while both property taxes and property insurance costs posted gains: up 9 percent and 4 percent, respectively. Other restaurant taxes, which include personal property, municipal, franchise and capital-stock taxes, leapt 17 percent on a per seat basis for full-menu tableservice operators between 1989 and 1990.

☐ *No change in administrative and general expenses.* Faced with other escalating controllable costs, full-menu

tableservice operators took decisive cost-control action regarding their administrative and general expenses between 1989 and 1990. Included in this group of expenses are costs necessary to the operation of the business, such as postage, printing, telephone and commissions on credit-card charges. In 1990, full-menu tableservice operators reported median administrative and general expenses of $218 per seat, unchanged from 1989.

Success at controlling direct operating costs and administrative expenses helped operators mitigate the effects of higher payroll, benefits and tax expenses.

□ *Direct operating expenses edge downward.* Operators also acted to control direct operating expenses, which include costs involved in customer service, such as uniforms, tableware and linens, and flowers and decorations. In 1990, full-menu tableservice survey respondents reported a median direct operating expense of $320 per seat in 1990, down almost 1 percent from 1989. Operators' efforts to better control both their direct operating and administrative/general expenses in 1990 helped to mitigate the effect of higher payroll, benefits and tax expenses.

—Hudson Riehle

Designated-driver programs are popular

The concept of having a designated driver who does not drink alcohol has grown in popularity among Americans as a way of combating drunk driving. Designated-driver programs are rated more highly than measures that would hold servers and manufacturers responsible for drunk persons who drive.

A Roper survey conducted in February 1991 reveals that enthusiasm for the designated-driver idea is high and is gaining momentum among Americans. In rating a list of eight ways to cope with the problem of drunk driving, a substantial majority—71 percent—agreed that the designated-driver approach is an "excellent" idea, and 22 percent said it's a "good" idea. The 1991 survey shows a marked increase from the 62 percent who thought the designated-driver idea was an excellent one in 1989.

The designated-driver idea received especially high "excellent" ratings from college graduates, working parents with children, opinion leaders and residents of the Midwest and Western states. It was ranked at the top of the list of eight ways to cope with the problem of drunk driving among all demographic groups.

The second ranking idea, advertisements to encourage people to drink responsibly (when they drink), received an "excellent" rating from 48 percent of respondents—well below the 71 percent who found the designated-driver idea excellent. Nevertheless, a total of 81 percent rated running more such advertisements as good or excellent.

Other anti-DWI ideas that held much less appeal but were described as good or excellent by a majority of Americans include

□ random police roadblocks (69 percent)

□ holding bar owners legally responsible for serving someone who is obviously intoxicated (60 percent)

□ a ban on advertising of alcoholic beverages (52 percent)

□ holding private citizens legally responsible for serving an obviously intoxicated individual who is involved in a drunk-driving accident (50 percent)

Meanwhile, an overwhelming majority of almost 75 percent reject the idea of outlawing the sale of alcoholic beverages completely, although 20 percent would favor prohibition.

Americans blame drinkers for drunk driving

According to the survey, Americans primarily blame people who drink alcohol (rather than those who

Which groups are not doing as much as they should do to help solve the problems of drunk driving?

Group	Percent of 1991 respondents	Percent of 1989 respondents
People who drink	58%	57%
The liquor industry	48	51
The beer industry	43	44
The wine industry	43	42
Bar and restaurant owners	41	41
The advertising industry	33	27
The courts	31	37
The television industry	29	24
State and local governments	25	27
The schools	21	20
The radio industry	19	15
The insurance industry	19	21
The police	19	21
Newspaper and magazines	18	18
None	6	4
Don't know	9	5

Source: Roper Reports

Ratings of suggested ways to combat the drunk-driving problem

	Percent of 1991 respondents who rated the suggestion					Percent of 1989 respondents who rated the suggestion "Excellent"
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't know	
Designated drivers who will refrain from drinking on an occasion where people gather to drink alcoholic beverages	71%	22%	4%	1%	1%	62%
Run more ads encouraging people, when they drink, to drink responsibly	48	33	10	8	2	49
Random police blocks to check for drunk drivers	34	35	14	14	1	29
Banning advertising of alcoholic beverages	28	24	20	23	2	31
Holding legally responsible a bar that serves alcohol to someone who has obviously had too much to drink and is subsequently involved in an accident while driving	28	32	17	20	3	25
Prohibit the sale of alcoholic beverages at supermarkets, convenience stores and gas stations	26	21	17	32	4	*
Holding legally responsible a private individual who serves alcohol in their home to someone who has obviously had too much to drink and is subsequently involved in an accident while driving	21	29	19	27	4	21
Outlaw the sale of alcoholic beverages completely	11	9	10	64	6	*

** not asked*
Source: Roper Reports

serve alcohol) for not doing as much as they should to solve the problem of drunk driving. A majority of adults, 58 percent, think people who drink are not doing as much as they should to stop drunk driving, similar to the 57 percent recorded in February 1989.

It is notable that Americans who are politically and socially active, known in the survey as "opinion leaders," are much more inclined than the average to say that people who drink should do more to stop drunk driving. In fact, 77 percent of opinion leaders said so, but they are also more inclined to say that each of the remaining 13 groups cited should do more. Their response suggests that they are especially concerned about the drunk-driving problem and want to see it addressed throughout society.

Clearly, Americans recognize that individuals themselves need to solve the drunk-driving problem. Nevertheless, nearly half, 48 percent, say the liquor industry is not doing as much as it could, and 43 percent think the beer and wine industries could do more. Forty-one percent feel that bar and restaurant owners should do more as well.

Among all demographic groups, the designated driver was ranked at the top of a list of eight ways to cope with the problem of drunk driving.

Although little change in consumer attitudes regarding purveyors of alcoholic beverages has occurred in two years, Americans are increasingly concerned that the advertising and TV industries are not doing as much as they should to combat drunk driving. In February 1991, 33 percent said the ad industry should be doing more, up 6 percentage points from 27 percent in 1989. Similarly, the proportion saying that TV should do more increased from 24 percent in 1989 to 29 percent in 1991.

In contrast, Americans are less inclined to say the courts should be doing more: 31 percent said so in 1991, versus 37 percent in 1989.

—Susan Mills

A look at regional economies

Revised estimates of second-quarter gross national product indicate that the nation's economy is still in a recession. But the economic climate varies from region to region. The extent to which restaurant operators have been affected by this latest recession depends on their region's economy. This article examines how various parts of the country have been affected by the economic slowdown.

Recession is probably the word least liked by the government, the business world and consumers alike. Technically speaking, any period during which real (inflation-adjusted) gross national product (GNP) declines for two consecutive quarters qualifies as a recession. According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, an independent nonprofit organization that is regarded as the determiner of recessionary periods, the nation officially entered the recession in July 1990. Recent revisions of the GNP indicate that the national economy continued to slide through the second quarter of 1991.

In examining this current economic downturn, it is important to point out a few differences between this recession and the two preceding ones: the recession of the late 1970s, which was characterized by double-digit inflation, and the recession of the early 1980s, characterized by double-digit unemployment. Unlike its predecessors, this recession does not show either double-digit unemployment or inflation. Through the first eight months of 1991, inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index advanced 4.8 percent above the first eight months of 1990. In addition, the Civilian Unemployment Rate,* although standing at roughly 6.8 percent for the nation through the first eight months of 1991, is nonetheless higher than the 5.5 percent level posted through the first eight months of 1990.

These statistics might cause some to wonder, "So what is the big deal? At least things aren't as bad as they have been in the past," which is correct. But the distinguishing characteristic of this recession is the substantial regional and even sub-regional variability in economic conditions.

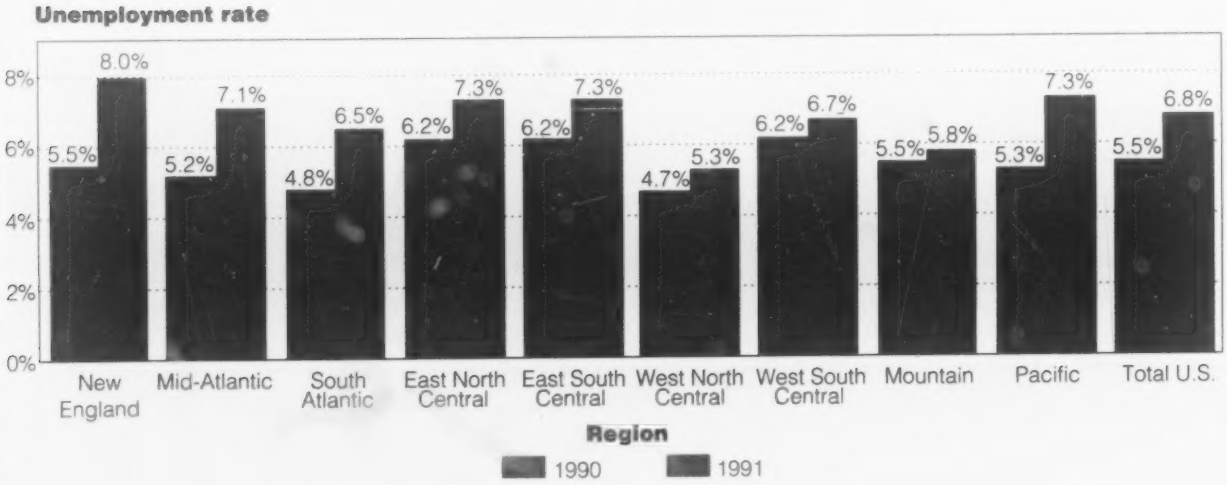
**Generally speaking, the nation's Civilian Unemployment Rate is reported on a seasonally adjusted basis. However, since seasonally adjusted labor force and unemployment figures were not available by region, the rates given in this article are based on unadjusted figures.*

Regional unemployment

The nation's jobless rate through the first six months of 1991 averaged just below 7 percent. But this rate is subject to great regional variance, as it ranges from a low of 5.3 percent in the West North Central region to 8.0 percent in New England.** Why the wide range? Much of it has to do

Civilian unemployment rates* by region, first 6 months of 1990 and 1991

Unemployment rates rose in every region in 1991



**Unemployment rate calculated using unadjusted figures*

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Restaurant Association

with the industrial mix of each region.

For example, the region with the lowest unemployment rate includes states such as Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska, which have a heavy dependence upon agriculture. The unemployment rates in these states tend to be lower because even in times of economic downturn, consumers still need to eat, and thus employment in the production and manufacturing of food products keeps employment from slumping. In contrast, much of the economy in the New England states (particularly in Massachusetts) is based on service industries such as finance, insurance and real estate. It is no surprise, then, that the softening of the real estate market in New England and down the East Coast has contributed to that region's slumping economy.

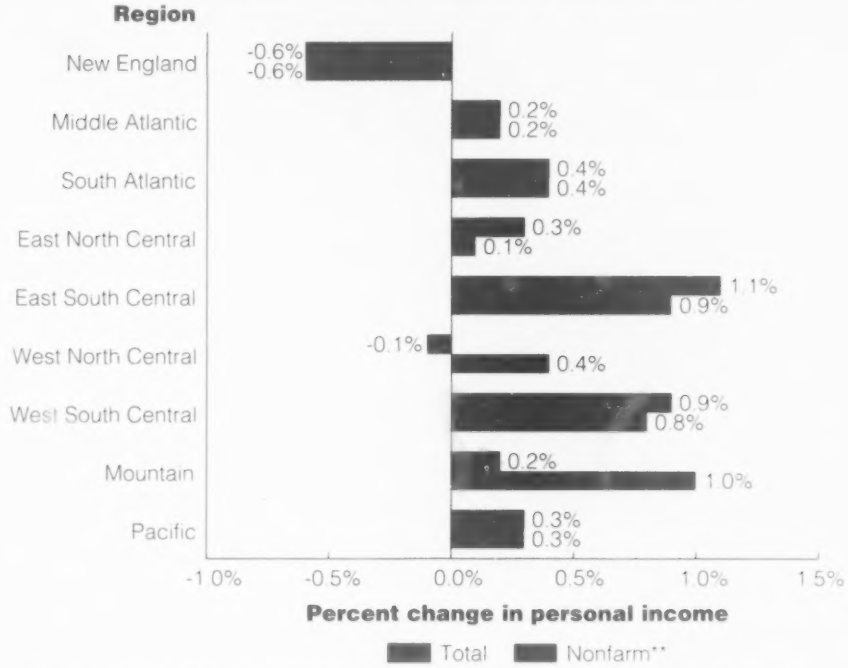
But the New England region is not the only one hard hit by slumping employment in financial services and related industries. The same is true in the Middle Atlantic states, most notably New York (especially New York City), where, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than 14 percent of the employed population is employed in the financial services and real estate sectors. Large cities in other regions have also been affected by the downturn in the real estate market and the difficulties of many banking institutions.

But problems in the larger service industries have not been the major source of unemployment problems everywhere. The decline in consumer expenditures for durables such as automobiles and major appliances has caused plant layoffs and declining hours worked in manufacturing centers in the East North Central and East South Central regions, as well as in parts of the West South Central region, particularly Arkansas.

***The regions used throughout this article are those used by the Bureau of the Census and are broken down as follows:*
New England: CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT
Middle Atlantic: NJ, NY, PA
South Atlantic: DC, DE, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV
East North Central: IL, IN, MI, OH, WI
East South Central: AL, KY, MS, TN
West North Central: IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD
West South Central: AR, LA, OK, TX
Mountain: AZ, CO, ID, MT, NM, NV, UT, WY
Pacific: AK, CA, HI, OR, WA

Percent change in personal income from fourth quarter 1990 to first quarter 1991

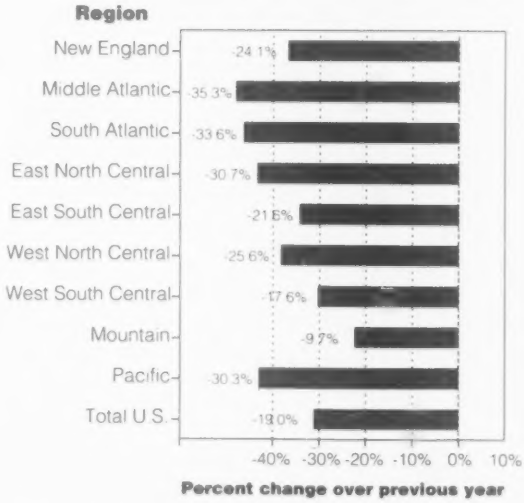
Personal income declined in 2 regions and grew at a sluggish pace in 5 others between the fourth quarter of 1990 and first quarter of 1991



**Personal income is defined as the total of wages and salaries plus dividends, interest and other labor income.*
***Excludes earnings made on or by farms*

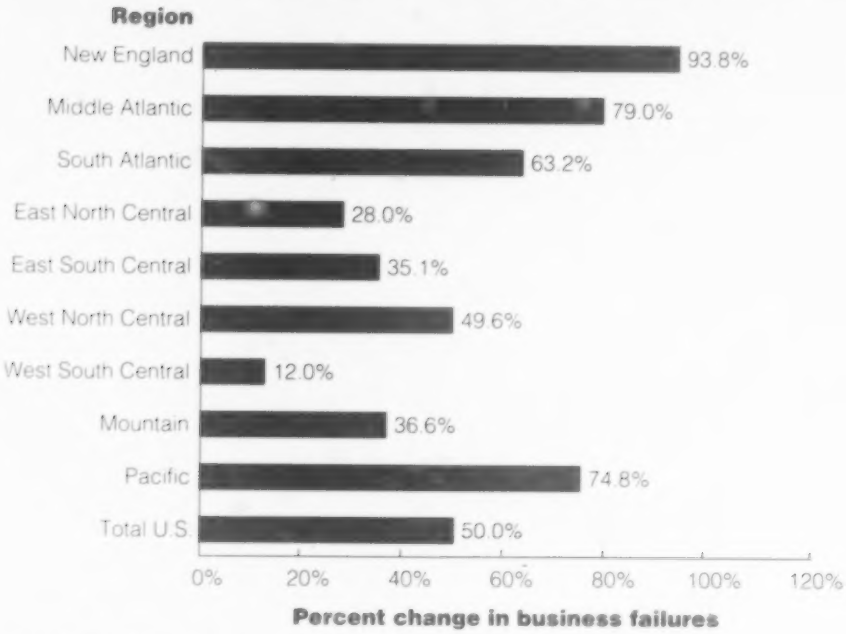
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

Percent change in overall consumer confidence



Note: *All changes are for first eight months of 1991 over first eight months of 1990.*

Source: Conference Board, National Restaurant Association



*First 6 months 1991, compared with first six months 1991

Source: Dun & Bradstreet

The Pacific states, a haven for those migrating from the high costs and sluggish economies of the East in the late 1980s, have not gone unscathed by this downturn. Much of the unemployment in these states is coming as a result of U.S. Department of Defense cutbacks. High-tech industries, especially those in parts of Southern California, have been hard hit by these cutbacks. In addition, poor weather conditions (lack of rain) have hampered much of the state's agricultural industry.

Personal income

Higher unemployment means a greater number of consumers with diminished income. According to the July *Survey of Current Business*, a report by the U.S. Department of Commerce, personal income (the total of all wages and salaries plus dividends and interest income and other labor income) advanced a meager 0.3 percent between the fourth quarter of 1990 and the first quarter of 1991—the smallest increase in 20 years. Nonfarm income (a somewhat better measure of performance due to the high degree of variability in farm income) also grew only 0.3 percent in the first quarter of 1991 from the fourth quarter of 1990, down from a 0.9 percent advance between the third and fourth quarters of 1990 and a 1.5 percent rise between the second and third quarters of 1990. Much of this decline is directly attributable to the rise in unemployment.

A look at personal income by region shows a strong tie between personal income growth and regional unemployment. In New England, the region with the highest unemployment rate, personal income actually declined 0.6 percent between the last quarter of 1990 and the first quarter of 1991. In contrast, the Mountain states, which recorded the second lowest unemployment rate, had the largest advance in nonfarm personal income: 1.0 percent.

Consumer confidence

In addition to a decline in income, unemployment also causes uneasiness among consumers. Concern about present or future employment and income may have the same psychological effect as actual unemployment. Consumers are hesitant to spend when they are concerned about not having a job in the future.

The Conference Board's Consumer Confidence Index is derived by asking individuals how they feel about both current and future (6 months from now) economic conditions in terms of business conditions, employment, availability of jobs and income.

Of all economic indicators, perhaps the best indicator of regional economic variability is regional consumer confidence. In New England, the region that many economists say has experienced the worst economic conditions, total consumer confidence declined 24 percent during the first eight months of 1991 compared with the first eight months of 1990. The "present situation" element of the index dropped a remarkable 93 percent over the same period. On the positive side was a 32 percent rise in the "expectations" index.

Although the drop in confidence was most evident in New England, none of the nine census regions posted an increase in confidence, and all but one region posted a double-digit decline in total confidence during the first eight months of 1991. Likewise, all nine regions recorded double-digit drops in "current situation" indexes, as increased unemployment in all regions has more consumers concerned about their employment situations.

In looking ahead to the remainder of 1991, New Englanders are the most optimistic, probably because many feel that the situation in their region cannot get much worse. The only other region to post an advance in expectations during the first eight months of 1991 (compared with the first eight months of 1990) was the Pacific region. Although the remaining seven regions recorded declines in their expectations, the declines are much smaller (ranging from 1.6 percent to 14.7 percent) than the declines in the "present situation" indexes. This indicates that a sense of optimism may be close at hand. If expectations in these regions rise, consumers may be more eager to spend and thus may spur regional economic growth.

—Nancy Michalski

Americans are ordering more pizza

No matter how you slice it, pizza has become a restaurant mainstay. In 1990, orders for pizza at restaurants increased nearly 5 percent and were included in 13 percent of restaurant orders. Recently, orders for carryout and pan pizza have made significant strides.

Second only to burgers, pizza has become one of the most popular items ordered in the "main dish" category of food items at restaurants. According to CREST,* hamburgers/cheeseburgers were included in 17 percent of eater occasions** in 1990, dropping from 19 percent in 1987. Stealing the spotlight is pizza. Included in 12 percent of eater occasions in 1987, pizza grew to be included in 13 percent of eater occasions by 1990. Viewed another way, the number of pizza orders advanced 12 percent between 1987 and 1990, triple the 4 percent growth in total restaurant orders during that time. In 1990 alone, pizza orders jumped nearly 5 percent.

The thick and thin of it

Fueling the fire of pizza's popularity was pan pizza. In 1987, orders for pan pizza represented just 14 percent of all pizza orders, but by 1990, orders for pan pizza grew to capture nearly one-quarter (22 percent) of total pizza orders—representing an impressive 72 percent gain in orders between 1987 and 1990.

A special CREST study reveals that pan pizza is one of the fastest-growing menu items in several parts of the country. Between 1987 and 1989, orders for pan pizza advanced 76 percent in the South and 48 percent in the Midwest, ranking this pizza type as the second fastest-growing menu item in each region. However, despite pan pizza's gaining popularity, thin pizza remains the pizza of choice. In 1990, 53 percent of pizza orders were for thin pizza, 23 percent were for thick pizza and 2 percent were for stuffed pizza.

Although the U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service does not track pizza consumption, per capita consumption of mozzarella cheese more than doubled between 1980 and 1989, reflecting the increase in pizza consumption. In 1989, Americans consumed 6.4 pounds of mozzarella cheese per person, up from 3.0 pounds in 1980.

Pizza restaurants

In 1990, fast food pizza restaurants captured one in five fast food restaurant orders, or 13 percent of total restaurant orders, according to CREST. The International Franchise Association estimates that in 1990 there were 21,954 franchised pizza restaurant units, representing $11.5 billion in sales. Compared with the estimated 19,243 franchised pizza restaurants in 1988 and $9.6 billion in sales, this concept posted dramatic gains in both the number of units and sales from franchised companies. Independent operators remain a strong force in the pizza market as well.

Customer counts at fast food pizza restaurants in 1990 were up 3 percent, following a 5 percent traffic gain in 1989. In comparison, total quickservice customer counts advanced a lower 2 percent in 1990 and 1 percent in 1989.

Delivery traffic slows

Off-premises consumption is a significant component of pizza restaurant business. In 1990, seven in 10 orders from fast food pizza restaurants were consumed outside the establishment, up 3 percentage points from 1987. This compares to about six in 10 of total fast food orders in 1990 that were consumed off premises. Driving the success of pizza restaurants, off-premises traffic at fast food pizza restaurants grew 14 percent between 1987 and 1990, compared with flat traffic growth in on-premises customer counts at these establishments.

However, delivery orders at pizza restaurants decreased slightly (1 percent) in 1990, after a 22 percent gain in delivery orders between 1987 and 1989. Still, delivery orders from pizza restaurants represented more than one-third (34 percent) of all off-premises traffic in 1990.

The 1990 gain in off-premises pizza restaurant traffic was fueled by carryout orders, which rose an impressive 10 percent. In 1990, carryout orders captured the majority of off-premises traffic at pizza restaurants (65 percent), while drive-thru orders accounted for the remaining 1 percent.

The majority of pizza operators offer a delivery service. According to a survey conducted by the National Association of Pizza Operators in 1991, more pizza operators said they offered delivery or planned to do so in the future, and fewer operators in 1991 charged a fee for delivery, compared with the previous year. Also, according to survey results,

Customer counts at pizza restaurants

In 1990, customer counts for carryout drove pizza restaurant growth

	1988–89	1989–90
On-premise traffic	6%	−3%
Off-premise traffic	5	6
Carryout	4	10
Delivery	8	−1

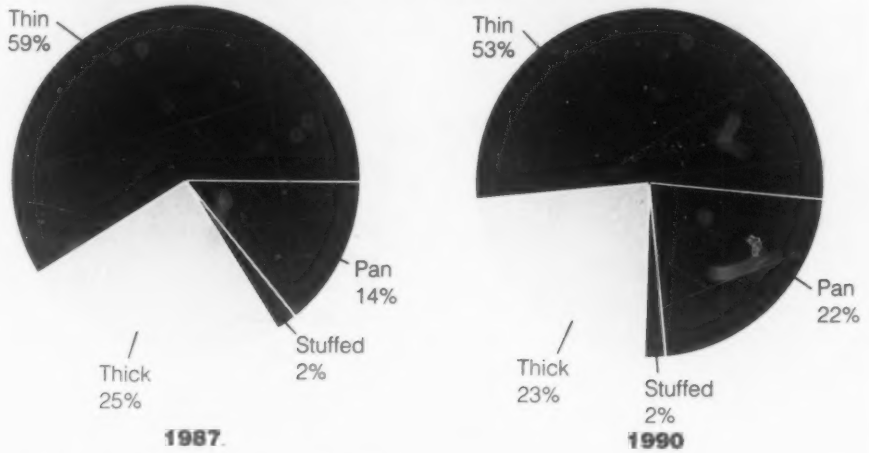
Source: *NPD/CREST Annual Household Reports*

CREST stands for Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, *a diary survey of one of the NPD marketing and research companies.*

***An eater occasion is one meal eaten by one person.*

Share of restaurant pizza orders by pizza type 1987 versus 1990

Pan pizza accounted for a larger slice of pizza orders in 1990 than in 1987



Source: *NPD/CREST Annual Household Reports*

more pizza establishments are backing off from a guarantee of delivery time.

Promotional use surges

Promotional usage is higher at pizza restaurants than at other restaurant concepts. In fact, in 1990 more than two in five orders from pizza restaurants involved some form of promotion. Moreover, this represents a dramatic increase from the past. In 1987, the use of promotions at pizza restaurants was a full 10 percentage points lower (32 percent), and in 1989 the deal rate was 36 percent. For fast food places, the deal rate in 1990 was a lower 23 percent.

Considering the high level of dealing, it is noteworthy that pizza restaurants have the second highest check size among fast food establishments. In 1990, the average check size per eater was $3.89 at pizza restaurants, excluding tips, compared with $2.88 for the total fast food industry. Only fast food Oriental places had a higher average check ($4.70). In comparison, fast food hamburger restaurants reported a lower average check ($2.55) in 1990.

One explanation for the higher check size at pizza restaurants is the propensity of consumers to order at dinnertime. In 1990, a dramatic 74 percent of orders at pizza restaurants were at dinner, 20 percent were for lunch, and 6 percent were for an evening snack. By comparison, in 1990 a smaller four in 10 orders in the fast food industry were at dinner. Also, weekends are a popular time to order pizza. In 1990, three in five orders at pizza restaurants occurred during the weekend (Friday to Sunday), compared with 52 percent for the fast food industry.

Kids account for large slice of orders

In 1990, customers aged 6 to 17 accounted for one in five pizza orders, and kids under 6 accounted for an additional 10 percent. In contrast, pizza was not so popular with the older crowd. Customers 45 years old and older placed just 17 percent of pizza orders.

Viewed another way, 21 percent of all orders from kids under 18 years included pizza, compared with 11 percent for patrons 18 and older. Pizza ranks third among food items included in kids' orders, surpassed only by hamburgers and by french fries. In 1990, hamburgers were included in 22 percent of orders for kids under 18, and french fries were included in 31 percent. A 1990 National Restaurant Association Gallup survey confirms pizza's popularity with kids: 15 percent of adults with children between 6 and 12 listed pizza as their child's favorite menu item.

Pepperoni reigns as king of toppings

An overwhelming majority of pizza operators report pepperoni to be the favored topping requested by customers. According to the National Association of Pizza Operators, in 1991 four in five pizza operators indicated pepperoni was their customers' first choice. Sausage ranked as the second most requested topping, followed by mushrooms. Anchovies was the least popular.

Gourmet toppings are gaining ground in some parts of the country. Such toppings include oysters, chicken, crayfish, dandelions, sprouts, eggplant, Cajun shrimp, artichoke hearts and tuna.

Mozzarella reigned as the most popular cheese on pizza. Nine out of 10 pizza operators surveyed reported using mozzarella on their pizza pies. About three in 10 offered provolone cheese; the next most popular was cheddar, followed by Parmesan, Romano, ricotta and Swiss. Nine in 10 pizza operators surveyed in 1990 said they used only "100 percent real cheese," down from the proportion who said so previously. Perhaps this decline is due to the increased interest in cheese alternatives for low-fat, low-cholesterol diets.

—Elizabeth Gordon

Recent upswing in cheese prices

After remaining flat during the first five months of 1991, cheese prices are on the upswing. Data from the National Cheese Exchange reveals that the wholesale price of cheddar cheese, a benchmark for other varieties, rose from $1.10 per pound in the beginning of May 1991 to $1.33 per pound by the end of August—a 21 percent increase. The recent cost increase can be attributed to lower milk supplies in the summer of 1991 due to extreme heat in the Midwest. Prices are expected to remain firm through the end of the year.

However, compared to previous wholesale cheese prices, 1991 prices were down. Cheddar cheese was $1.46 per pound at the end of August 1989 and $1.38 per pound at the end of August 1990, compared to $1.33 at the end of August 1991.

Foodservice Market Measure

August 1991

In August foodservice patronage held the ground it gained in July as 51 percent of adults reported they were foodservice patrons on a typical day. Although there are no figures for comparison from August 1990, it is worth noting that overall patronage this August is in line with last September's figure of 52 percent.

Of particular interest in August 1991 was the relative strength of on-premises patronage. Thirty-five percent of adults reported that they were on-premises patrons on a typical August day, a level second only to patronage in March, when consumer confidence soared as the Persian Gulf War ended.

Since posting a sharp gain in the spring, consumer confidence has been edging downward. Consumers' relatively low confidence about their current situation is indicative of a sluggish economy. Nevertheless, consumer expectations suggest that an improvement is coming.

Summer patronage

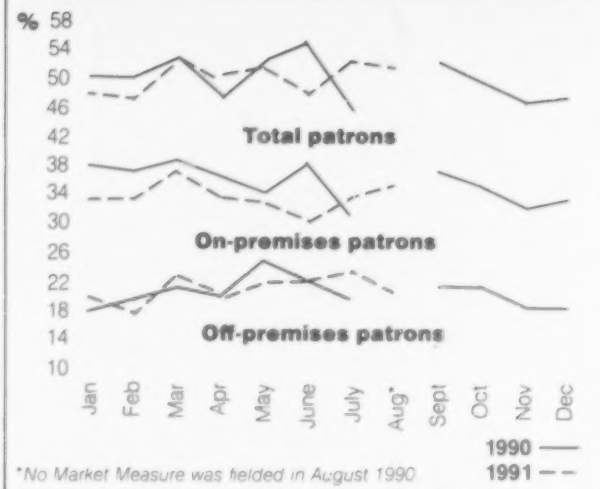
In the July–August summer months, 52 percent of adults were foodservice patrons on a typical day. Thirty-four percent ate a meal or snack on the premises of a restaurant, fast food place or other eating place, and 22 percent purchased food to go or had it delivered.

Males were more inclined than females to be foodservice patrons in July–August, but slight increases in the likelihood of patronage occurred for both sexes in the summer months, when compared with earlier this year.

Consumers who live in the Midwest and South were more likely than those living on either coast to be foodservice patrons in July–August. While the likelihood of patronage rose in July–August for those residing in the Midwest and South, it posted little change in the eastern and western regions of the country.

—Susan Mills

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons



*No Market Measure was fielded in August 1990

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day

	January–June 1991	July–August 1991	Percentage point change
Male	52%	54%	+2
Female	47	49	+2
White	48	52	+4
Nonwhite	54	50	−4
Age			
18 to 24 years old	62	60	−2
25 to 34 years old	54	54	–
35 to 44 years old	51	58	+7
45 to 54 years old	49	50	+1
55 to 64 years old	42	47	+5
65 and older	34	37	+3
Income			
$40,000 or more	56	56	–
$20,000 to $39,999	47	52	+4
Less than $20,000	44	49	+5
Region			
East	48	49	+1
Midwest	49	54	+5
South	50	54	+4
West	50	48	−2

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day

	January–June 1991	July–August 1991	Percentage point change
On premises	33%	34%	+1
Off premises	21	22	+1
Meal period			
Breakfast	6	6	–
Lunch	25	27	+2
Dinner	24	24	–

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Foodservice Market Measure

The Foodservice Market Measure is based on 1,000 telephone interviews, conducted by the Gallup Organization each month, with a nationally representative sample of adults age 18 and older. Each person is asked the same questions:

1. Which of the following did you do yesterday?

☐ Ate on the premises of a restaurant, fast food place, cafeteria or any other place where you purchased a meal or snack.

☐ Purchased takeout food "to go" or had it delivered.

2. Was the food you ate on premises yesterday for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

3. Was the takeout food you purchased or had delivered for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

The monthly tracking of purchases is supplemented by quarterly inquiries on topics of industry interest.

1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: Meredith, NH
Association members: Russell, Glenn, Lynn and Dale Hart
Operation: Hart's Turkey Farm Restaurant
Profile: Family restaurant
In business: 36 years
Seats: 550
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

In the mid-1980s, New Hampshire's economy was booming, unemployment was at a ridiculously low 1.6 percent and Hart's Turkey Farm Restaurant was flourishing. But, as co-owner **Russell Hart** explains, "things kind of fell apart on us a couple of years ago." Most area businesses, including the family-owned lakeside restaurant, are now being weakened by the rippling effect of the economic slide.

"No restaurant here is doing better in 1991 than in 1990," says Hart, who co-owns the restaurant with his brother and sisters.

In response to the economic slide, the Harts introduced a lower-priced children's menu and have held other prices down. Daily specials, couponing and sales contests among the waitstaff also work to increase sales.

"Our bottom line is still good," Hart explains. "You can still keep a stable bottom line by controlling your food costs and labor costs."

The area's unemployment rate of nearly 7 percent has actually helped the restaurant in one way: finding employees.

2 MID-ATLANTIC

Location: Pittsburgh, PA
Association members: John Del Pizzo, Marianne Giglio
Operation: Del's Restaurant
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 43 years
Seats: 200
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Ten years ago, Pittsburgh government closed a bridge that linked Del's Restaurant with the downtown business district. The move could have choked off the restaurant's lunch business or even forced the restaurant to shut down.

But, as owner **John Del Pizzo** explains, adversity was turned into advantage when Del's began a lunchtime delivery service to the business district.

Dinner business at Del's is slowly picking up again after a slow first half of 1991, but sales continue to run 2 to 3 percent behind last year. Pizzo says the introduction of early-bird specials has helped.

"The early birds are the only reason we're staying above water," says Pizzo. For $5.25, the early-bird special includes soup, salad, a choice of five entrees, a pasta side dish and ice cream.

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Parkersburg, WV
Association member: James E. Colombo
Operation: Colombo's Restaurant
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 37 years
Seats: 450
Meals served: Dinner

Consistently good food and quality service have helped this family restaurant show increased sales again this year. A variety of major companies nearby has helped stabilize the area's economy during the unsteady economic times.

"We greet our customers at the door and remember names. It's good business," says owner **James E. Colombo.** His 79-year-old father, **James B. Colombo,** opened the restaurant in 1954 and continues to be the main greeter, while matriarch **Anna Colombo** still watches over the making of her spaghetti sauce recipe in the kitchen.

The owner gives credit to a loyal waitstaff for the restaurant's fine service. Three waitresses have been at Colombo's for more than 20 years, while another 10 of them have worked between 10 and 15 years. The familiar staff has helped build a local following.

Colombo says the restaurant started as a small 55-seat family diner and "has gotten a lot bigger than we ever thought it would be." The restaurant has expanded five times during the past 20 years.

4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Boonville, IN
Association members: Ray and Mary Rankin
Operation: Village Fireside Pizza
Profile: Family restaurant
In business: 13 years
Seats: 96
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Pizza for breakfast? Not really. But residents of Boonville (pop. 6,000) are gradually catching on to the availability of a traditional breakfast at Village Fireside Pizza.

"It does make people wonder," says co-owner **Ray Rankin.** "Some people still think that the only thing we have is pizza, but they eventually find out about our breakfast after they've lived in town for a while."

Rankin says business at Village Fireside Pizza has been very good, as the town has avoided the economic problems that have plagued the coasts.

"I'm here to receive people and greet them," he says. "Public relations work keeps a good neighborhood crowd coming back. We know most of our customers by their first names."

The restaurant, located just east of Evansville, hosts a successful all-you-can-eat fish-and-chicken dinner on Fridays and Saturdays.

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Louisville, KY
Association members: Howard and Tim Poole

Operation: Dizzy Whizz Drive-In
Profile: Curb-service eatery
In business: 44 years
Seats: 50 inside, 35 parking lanes
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

In a year in which many Louisville restaurants were barely staying afloat, Dizzy Whizz Drive-In experienced an unexpected "tremendous" year in 1990, according to manager **Tim Poole.** Last year, sales increased by 20 percent.

"For some reason, the restaurant caught on last year," says Poole, who cannot explain any definite reason for the progress. Dizzy Whizz is again experiencing growth in 1991, but at a more modest 4 to 5 percent.

The restaurant features 50 indoor seats, including a 1950s-style counter that serves 10 people. He notes that Dizzy Whizz is the only curb-service establishment in Louisville.

"People like the novelty of a place like this," says Poole, whose father, **Howard Poole,** was the original owner.

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Des Moines, IA
Association members: Jim and Noah Lacona
Operation: Noah's Ark Ristorante
Profile: Casual Italian
In business: 44 years
Seats: 210 in dining room, 110 banquet seats
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Business is growing at Noah's Ark Ristorante in both sales and number of meals served.

"I look more at the meals served [figures] to get an idea of how we're doing," explains co-owner **Jim Lacona.** "Because of price increases, sales figures will fool you. I don't think they give as accurate a view of traffic."

The restaurant features Italian foods and pizza, but also offers up steak and seafood. Noah's Ark jumped on the health-conscious bandwagon six years ago by introducing broiled chicken, fruit plates and cholesterol-free cooking.

Lacona says that people seem to be more cautious with their money these days, especially when it comes to the business lunch. "We're seeing less and less of the long lunch hour," he says. Tighter expense accounts and concern over alcohol liability, explains Lacona, have been two reasons for slower business traffic.

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Shreveport, LA
Association member: Charlotte Anthony
Operation: Smith's Cross Lake Inn
Profile: Midscale dinner house
In business: 36 years
Seats: 140 in dining room, 200 banquet seats
Meal served: Dinner

"Up until 1982, we had never known anything but an increase," says **Charlotte Anthony,** owner of Smith's Cross Lake Inn. "That's not happening anymore. The streak is now going the other way: down."

Anthony says that when the oil business hit the skids in the early '80s, the economic fallout reached deep into other industries. Unemployment has reached 7.6 percent.

"You see the same people, but you just don't see them as often," says Anthony. "They all say the same thing: that they can't afford to come here every week like they used to."

Smith's has tried everything to increase traffic: remodeling, direct mail, adding pasta dishes and doing all the advertising they can afford. About four times each year, the restaurant serves meals to tour guides in hopes of increasing tourist business.

"We're lucky that our property, equipment and building are already paid for. If we had to pay rent every month, we couldn't make it," says Anthony.

Staffing is one of the few situations that has not been a problem at Smith's. The same five waitresses have been on staff since 1965.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Silver Springs, NV
Association member: Diannia Piper
Operation: Piper's
Profile: Casual restaurant
In business: 4 years
Seats: 40
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Competition has again come to Piper's, as a second restaurant opened in Silver Springs in mid-August. Manager **Mandy Piper** says the return of competition has not affected business at the 24-hour eatery.

The restaurant, located 40 miles northwest of Carson City in a town of 2,500, is coming off an especially successful summer. A banquet facility for local clubs and organizations helps keep traffic consistent throughout the year. In addition, the restaurant sponsors street dances, outside barbecues, pool tournaments, live music and a road rally.

The family-run building also includes a beauty shop, office space, motel rooms and 15 slot machines.

9 PACIFIC

Location: Carmel, CA
Association member: Anton Salameh
Operation: Anton & Michel's
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 12 years
Seats: 100 in dining room, 30 in lounge
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

A sluggish tourism season fueled by a poor economy kept sales down this summer at Anton and Michel's in Carmel. Co-owner **Anton Salameh** says that sales were off by about 6 percent compared with last year.

In response to the sales drop, the upscale restaurant has resolved not to increase prices on food or liquor. Salameh said he hopes to increase check averages by training the staff in selling procedures.

In addition, Anton & Michel's is increasing its advertising budget this year. A four-color brochure will be placed in local hotels and motels while the restaurant is being publicized in television commercials for the first time. "The TV ads are to remind the locals to come back. It's not really meant to reach the tourists," says Salameh.

The restaurant faces some stiff competition. Salameh says nearly 25 similar restaurants are located on the Monterey Peninsula, an area that includes the 80,000 residents of Monterey, Pacific Grove and Carmel.

—Pat DiDomenico

Only smoking

As consumer pressure mounts and no-smoking ordinances are passed, fewer restaurants are giving smokers a chance to enjoy an after-dinner smoke.

In California, for example, at least six cities have already banned smoking in restaurants, and legislation has been proposed to prohibit it statewide.

But there are a few flickers of hope for California smokers. Some restaurants are turning against the tide by introducing "Cigar Nights." At Ma Maison in Los Angeles, the first Monday of every month is cigar night, where patrons may puff as they please. Remi in Santa Monica also offers monthly cigar celebrations. And Remi in New York is carrying the trend to the East Coast as well.

—*Food Arts*

Marbled, but lean

A recent innovation from GFI America of Minneapolis seeks to put succulence and flavor into a lean-beef product, without the high fat and cholesterol counts. Known as SmartMeat, the beef is defatted but—believe it or not—well marbled.

This beef is drawn from grass-fed cattle that have not been fattened in feedlots. The original cuts from these cattle are tough, but low in fat and cholesterol. The super-lean meat is then transformed through a secret trademarked process known as "vacu-marbling." The meat is skinned of external fat and then mechanically "fattened." This "fat" is a mixture of margarine, water, soy protein, salt and dextrose and may be present in the final product up to 15 percent. This margarine marbling gives SmartMeat the marbled look of standard meats.

—*Los Angeles Times*

Truck stop treasures

In classic truck stops of old, tired truckers would haul a rig in for a tank of diesel, order a blue-plate special (or maybe two), catch a few winks and hit the road again. But truck stops are changing, offering far more than a pump and a plate.

At Petro's new 30-acre truck stop in Florence, South Carolina, for example, truckers can visit the hair salon for a shave and a cut—or even a dye job. The Iron Skillet Restaurant in residence offers not only hearty food but telephones at every table. Other truck-stopping services include fax machines, TV rooms and ice cream shops. At Sapp Brothers truck stop in Omaha, Nebraska, and at Petro's in Kingdom City, Missouri, even doctors have opened up shop.

These new "stopping malls" for the driving life are beginning to attract motels and fast food outlets as well. A truck stop in Wheeler Ridge, California, hosts one of the nation's largest Burger Kings.

—*USA Today*

Basics for businesspeople

In their efforts to win business, hotels have gone after business travelers by offering them everything from in-room offices to exercise bikes. But according to two recent surveys, it's the little things that matter most—things that save time and say "welcome." Trendy amenities are of much less interest.

One survey of Ramada Renaissance Hotel customers revealed that the most convenient service offered to business travelers was a video or express check-out system. Other highly rated items were complimentary breakfasts, newspapers and in-room coffee makers—classic standards of hospitality.

An amenities survey turned up a less enthusiastic response for trendier hospitality offerings. Only 46 percent of guests were likely to use an in-room stationary bike, and a rental cellular phone interested only 19 percent of travelers surveyed.

—Ramada International Hotels & Resorts

Service under stress

Ever notice that your service staff looks a bit piqued, that the smile's a bit too strained or the skin a bit too pale? It could be the result of stress. A recent survey ranks waiting tables about as stressful a job as fighting fires.

The survey, conducted by *Men's Health* magazine, asked three job-stress specialists to rate stress levels (both physical stress and psychological stress) of various jobs. Factors taken into account included degree of danger, number of deadlines or quotas, competitive pressure and degree of control the worker had over results.

Cops and inner-city schoolteachers had the highest stress ratings, but restaurant servers fell not far behind, surrounded by such obviously high-stress positions as firefighters, medical interns, assembly-line workers and air-traffic controllers.

—*Wall Street Journal*

BRIDGE THE GAP

BETWEEN FOODSERVICE AND CONGRESS